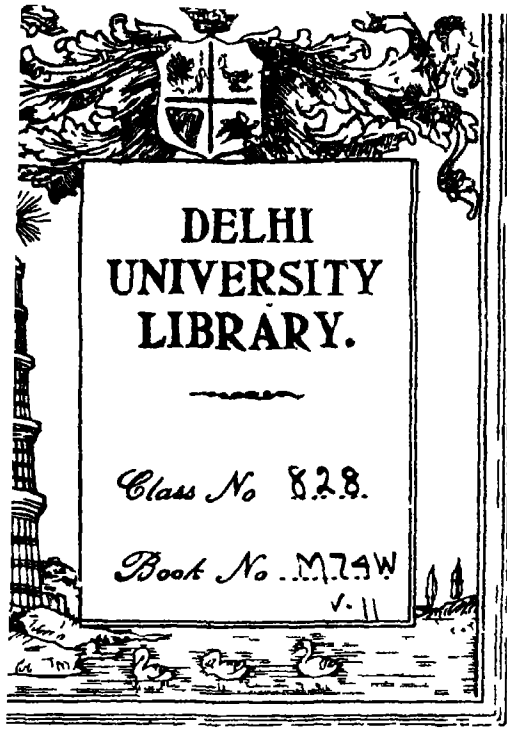

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EBURY EDITION

'HAIL AND FAREWELL!

THE WORKS OF GEORGE MOORE

EBURY EDITION

A MUMMER'S WIFE

MUSLIN

CONFESSIONS OF A YOUNG MAN

ESTHER WATERS

THE UNTILLED FIELD

THE LAKE

MEMOIRS OF MY DEAD LIFE

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THE PASSING OF THE ESSENES

'HAIL AND FAREWELL

VALE

BY

GEORGE MOORE



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VALE

I

It was about the time of the publication of my letter to the *Irish Times*, mentioned in the last pages of *Salve*, that I received from the French Consul an invitation to dinner to meet the Secretary of the Consulate, M. Orange, a young man, a poet, *au moins il a publié un volume de vers chez Lemerre*. The Méaulles, Monsieur et Madame, are among my pleasantest memories of Dublin, and on the night in question, when it was time to bid our host and hostess good night, I proposed to Orange that we should walk back to Dublin together, thinking that perhaps he might like to talk French poetry with me. As we passed through the garden-gate he muttered: *voilà une soirée bien passée*. He was quite right; we had passed a pleasant evening in pleasant company. But when he repeated the same words at the same place the next time we dined at the Méaulles', I began to read into them a hidden meaning: that we were nearer our graves than we had been earlier in the afternoon; and when he repeated the same words some weeks afterwards, and in the same place, they took on still another meaning: that we being men of letters would have done better had we stayed at home reading books under our lamps. And as we strode along together I resolved that I would reacquire the habit of reading without it occurring to me that the temptation is always by the talker to lay his book aside and go out to look up a friend, especially in Dublin, where casual visiting is our single pleasure.

And Orange's criticism of life leaving me no peace, I begged Teresa one evening, after she had removed the cloth, to tell whosoever called that I was not at home; and when she had put my coffee on the table I said: The moment has come for me to pick out a book from the shelves. But which? I knew

that a large volume containing Shakespeare's plays stood on the third shelf and that I should find in it a well of pure literature undefiled. Alarums, excursions, and the blowing of trumpets over the field of Agincourt, Kings in full armour rushing about crying for *destriers*—the French word for what we would call a cob, compact and thick-set. He charges like a *destrier* in the Henrys, and after the charge retires to a hawthorn-tree and neighs a melodious plaint of graves and worms and epitaphs. But Balzac appealed to me for a moment and my eyes ran through the titles of the edition printed in 1855, a prize brought back from Paris some months ago, but never looked into ; treated, alas ! like a wife, a sort of matrimonial edition, and only known to me by a long attempt to read *César Birotteau*, an adventure that had stopped half-way, so cumbersome was the burly Tourainean in this story, so slow was he to rise, like a cart-horse asleep in the middle of the road, too heavy to struggle to his hooves in less than a hundred pages, but getting away at last. His ends are no doubt fine and thunderous. All the same, Turgenev didn't believe in him, and glancing down a line of small volumes I said : Turgenev is neither cob nor dray, but an Arab carrying in every story a lady as romantic as one of Chopin's ballads, especially the third, and I thought of the celebrated phrase. Maupassant detained me for a moment and then seemed to me too much like an intrigue with a housemaid. Goncourt ? The fashion of yesterday and to-day older than Herodotus. Pater? His Epicurean ? A tide of honeyed words preached by a divine from an ivory pulpit, well worth re-reading, but——

And I returned to my chair frightened, feeling that if I did not learn to read my life would become a burden to me and to others. Everybody will fly from me, my friends will melt away. Edward wouldn't open to me the other night, he preferred his book to my talk, and he continues to struggle through Ruskin, and John Eglinton toils at *Don Quixote*. Those fellows can live alone, and Æ . . . ah, well, Æ ! And then my thoughts left me. I read the newspaper, and at a

quarter to eleven lit my candle, hoping that in bed some interesting book would come to mind. But when Teresa had removed the cloth the next night and the moment for choosing had come again, I was unable to conquer a mysterious reluctance. It seemed pleasanter to think about Stevenson than to read him, and of all, to remember that I had once called him a young man walking in the Burlington Arcade, the best-dressed young man that ever walked in the Burlington Arcade, but little else. We writers know how to get the knife under the other fellow's ribs. I raised my head to listen : footsteps sounded in the street, and it seemed as if somebody was coming to see me. . . . The moment grew tense and relaxed, and when the footsteps of the wanderer died away in the distance of Hume Street, I sat limp and miserable, afraid to look round lest somebody should be crouching in the corner of the distant room.

But I had come home to read, and read I must, and it seemed to me that what was needed was some long work that would leave a definite impression upon the mind. There was *Tom Jones ;* professors of literature declare it to be England's finest novel, but I remembered it merely as a very empty work written in a breezy manner ; and there was Richardson whom I had not read at all ; *Clarissa Harlowe* in how many volumes of letters ? And after these writers came Miss Burney, and the name of one of her books floated through my mind, the name of some woman, Emily, Julia—no. There was Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* still unread, and some one had given me a copy saying that no one would ever appreciate Sterne more than I. . . . But my cigar was burning so fragrantly that Sterne was once again postponed, and I lay back in the armchair, dozing in the warmth that a huge lump of coal sent out from the grate, and, my brain stupefied in the heat, I said to myself : Though I may have lost the habit of reading, I have acquired, perhaps more than any other human being, another habit, the habit of thinking. I love my own thoughts ; and the past is a wonderful mirror in which I

spend hours watching people and places I have known; dim, shadowy and far away they seem, and pathetic are the faces, and still more pathetic is the way everybody follows his little prejudices; however unreasonable they may be we must follow them. The Colonel said the other day that he could accept all that his Church teaches; Transubstantiation, the Immaculate Conception, even the Pope's indulgences did not trouble him; he found it difficult, however, to believe in the immortality of his soul. If Death deprives me of my senses of feeling and seeing, of my intellect, of everything that is me, how can it be said that I exist? he asked, shielding his face with his hand from the fire. How can it be said that I, the *personality connoted by the pronoun, exist*? *We are all* Agnostics at heart. And then it seemed to me that the Colonel and I were engaged in some argument, not about the immortality of the soul, but about a letter that I had written to the *Irish Times* in which he declared that I had libelled him, and then my father seemed to have come back to this world again, and, picking up the letter about which my brother and I were disputing, he declared that he could detect no libel in it but a great many misspellings and mistakes in grammar, and that I must go back to Oscott at once. I was there in a trice, face to face with the headmaster, no other than Sir Thomas More, who was deeply shocked that any descendant of his should use the language as badly as I had done in the bundle of papers which he held in his hand. . . .

The thought of undergoing further school-days awoke me suddenly, and at the same moment the door opened. Good Heavens! Who is it? What is it?

It was only Teresa bringing in glasses and decanters, and when I had recovered my senses sufficiently I began to think of the two portraits of Sir Thomas More brought from Ashbrook. The heavy monkish jowl and the cocked hat had often awakened a frightened antipathy in me, setting me thinking that there must be a fine strain of Protestant blood flowing in the Moores. But which was the one who discovered

himself to be a Protestant? I moved to the writing-table and wrote asking the Colonel for his name, and a few days after Teresa handed me an envelope on which I recognised my brother's handwriting, and making at once for my arm-chair, I read that Sir Thomas More had married twice, begetting a son and three daughters by his first wife. These had remained Papists, and it was not till the second generation that the change came. John had two sons, both called Thomas. The elder founded the line of Barnborough, now extinct; but the younger Thomas discovered himself to be a Protestant, and the Colonel reminded me that if I decided to throw over Sir Thomas More I should also have to throw over the honour of having a Protestant clergyman in the family. The clergyman had three sons, of whom little is known except their names. Two of them went to live in Essex; the third, another Thomas, disappeared into Mayo, is is said.

This tradition, the Colonel wrote, finds support in the fact that there was a Thomas More in Mayo in the seventeenth century who had a son called George, and this George took part in the Williamite wars in Ireland, and it appears that he must have conducted himself well at the Battle of the Boyne, for King William bestowed on him the title of Vice-Admiral of Connaught, a title which he held twice, a considerable title still, for its present holder is Lord Lucan. He was buried near Straid Abbey in Mayo, with this inscription upon his tomb. THIS IS THE BURIAL PLACE OF CAPTAIN GEORGE MORE AND HIS DESCENDANTS, 1723. His son obtained a lease of some property known as Legaphouca, and from this deed we learn that he had two sons, George and John, and that John married Miss Jane Lynch Athy of Renvyle, a Catholic, and brought her to live with him at Ashbrook. Of this marriage there were two sons; one died, and the surviving son, George, seeing that the family fortunes were dwindling, sailed away to Spain and became a Catholic.

But why doesn't he tell me our great-grandfather's reasons for preferring Rome to Canterbury? And taking a cigar out of the box, I lay back in my armchair, and whilst watching the smoke ascend into the crystals of the chandelier, tarnishing them and diverting my thoughts from my great-grandfather, I remembered that the whole chandelier must soon be taken to pieces and cleaned, and that on the night of our quarrel, or rather the following morning, the Colonel had told me that our great-grandfather married a Miss Kilkelly, a Spaniard despite her name, if a hundred years of Spain can turn a Milesian back into a Spaniard. Wild Geese these Kilkellys were, fled from Ireland after the siege of Limerick—a handsome woman in a green silk dress, heavily flounced, her hands on the keys of a spinet, the kind of woman who would tempt a man to become a Catholic, a merchant interested above all in his business and only faintly in religious questions. It was she that did it. And he felt no repugnance in being bedded with a Papist . . . strange.

A little later another explanation emerged as a wreath of smoke curled upwards into the chandelier. My great-grandfather had changed his religion before setting out for Spain, knowing well that as a Protestant he could not trade in a country where the Inquisition was still a going concern. He became a Catholic as a precautionary measure, I said, and wrote that very night to the Colonel asking for the date of our grandfather's conversion. The reply to this question came a few days afterwards. It was not mentioned in any family paper, but of one thing he was sure, sexual reasons did not determine it, for no religious difficulty in connection with his marriage had arisen. You must remember, he wrote, that our great-grandfather's mother was a Catholic, and it was probably the mother's influence.

How little these Papists understand religion, I said, and walked about the room muttering, He could not very well ask me to picture the great merchant retiring to his room after business hours to read the Fathers, so he concludes that

it was his mother's influence that effected the conversion. Ary Scheffer's picture of St. Augustine and Monica rose up before my eyes, and I vowed that it was kelp that had turned my great-grandfather into a Papist. Much better it should have been kelp than Kempis, I said; much better for me. And it amused me to think of the ships laden with seaweed coming round the Bay of Biscay from the Arran Islands to my great-grandfather in Alicante, and the burnt kelp filling the iron chest (still at Moore Hall), and quickly, with ducats, and my great-grandfather returning to Ireland, a sort of mercantile pirate of the Spanish Main. The Colonel's letter told me that it was with two hundred and fifty thousand pounds he returned, on the lookout for investments for his money, and for a site whereon to build the fine Georgian house he had in mind. He would have built it at Ashbrook if there had been a prospect, but there being none, he bought Muckloon, a pleasant green hill overlooking Lough Carra; and the Colonel mentioned that our great-grandfather used to sit on the steps of Moore Hall, his eyes fixed on the lake. I have travelled far, he is reported to have said, but have seen nothing as beautiful as Lough Carra. And he is reported truly, for such simple words are not invented. The phrase evokes a picture: A morning in early May, and an elderly man sitting, his eyes fixed on a lake set among low shores, still as a mirror—a mirror on which somebody has breathed—an elderly man in a wig and a scarlet coat. It is thus that he is apparelled in the portrait that hangs in the dining-room, painted when and by whom there is no record. In it he is a man of thirty, and when he was thirty he was in Alicante. It is pleasant to have a portrait of one's ancestor in a wig, and in a vermilion coat with gold lace and buttons, white lace at the collar and cuffs—probably a Spanish coat of the period. The face is long, sheep-like, and distinguished—the true Moore face as it has come down to us. My brother Augustus was the living image of his great-grandfather—the same long face, the same long, delicately shaped nose, without, however,

the gay eyes, cloudless as a child's. No face ever told the tale of a happy life more plainly, nor could it be else, everything having succeeded with him. He seemed to have run misfortune clean out of sight, but he had made a little too much running, and was overtaken in the last few years. On awakening one morning he asked his valet why he had not opened the shutters. The servant answered that he had opened them. But the room is dark. No, sir; the room is quite light. Then I am blind! he said.

Who has heard of a more horrible discovery than to have gone blind in one's sleep? Is it to be wondered that his courage died, and that the rest of his life was lived between priest and doctor, in terror of death? for he had become a Catholic. Nor were blindness and fear of death all his misfortunes. His wife wearied of Moore Hall, and her sons bored her. Peter was witless; John, the first President of the Irish Republic, was arrested at Athlone and driven along the roads with other rebels to Castlebar. He died in prison. George, the eldest son, a mild, visionary youth, was interested in literature, and was admired and made much of at Holland House, so the Colonel tells me. And without wife or child the last years of the blind man at Moore Hall must have been very sad and lonely. One room was the same as another to him, and with the disappearance of the lake his thoughts returned to Ashbrook, and the little Protestant cemetery near Straid Abbey. He was the last who thought of Ashbrook with affection. My father did not seem to like to speak of the place; he only went there to collect rents, and the same unsentimental errand took me to Ashbrook when I returned from Paris in 1880. Tom Ruttledge and I had driven through Mayo, visiting all my estates, trying to come to terms with the tenants, and at Ashbrook a crowd had followed the car up a boreen, babbling of the disastrous year they had been through: the potato crop had been a failure; there was no diet in them.

The phrase caught on my ear, and I remember well the

two-storeyed house standing on a bare hillside. The woods had been felled long ago, all except a few ash-trees left standing in the corner of the field to shelter the cattle from the wind, and the house, having been inhabited by peasants for a long time, presented a sad degradation, a sagging roof, and windows so black that I did not dare to think of the staircase leading to the drawing-room, in which my great-grandmother had stitched that pretty piece of tapestry which is now in the Kensington Museum. Dunne, my tenant, a heavy, surly fellow, whose manners were not engaging (we heard afterwards he was the leader of a notable conspiracy against us), asked us to step inside, but fearing to meet with chickens in the parlour that perhaps still had the ancient paper on its walls, I pleaded that the day was drawing to a close, and asked him if he would be kind enough to take me to my great-grandfather's grave. He turned aside, and the peasants answering for him said :

Sure we will, your honour.

So this is the brook, I thought to myself, and watched the water trickle through masses of weeds and rushes. We crossed some fields and came to a ruined chapel, and my peasants pointed to an incised stone let into the wall, the loneliest grave it seemed to me in all the world ; and drowsing in my armchair, unable to read, the sadness that I had experienced returned to me, and I felt and saw as I had done thirty years before. I had thought then of the poor old man who had built Moore Hall deciding at last that his ashes were to be carried to Ashbrook. But the Colonel, I said, mentions Straid Abbey as the burial-place of Captain George Moore and his descendants, and the little ruined chapel that was shown to me can't be Straid Abbey.

A few days afterwards another letter came from the Colonel replying to my reproaches that his answers to my questions were vague and insufficient, and from this letter I learnt that my great-grandfather's misfortunes did not cease with his death. He had left instructions in his will that he wished to

be buried with his ancestors in the little Protestant cemetery near Straid Abbey. The Colonel had discovered it half a mile down the road, after having searched Straid Abbey vainly for the tomb of Captain George Moore, and his letter told me how he had had some difficulty in pushing his way through a mass of briars and hemlock and in finding the inscription among the ruins of the church; but he had found it.

So it was there that my great-grandfather had wished to be buried, but he was buried at Ashbrook in a Catholic chapel. By mistake, the Colonel says in his letter. By mistake! I cried. Any breach of faith were better than that he should be laid with his Protestant forebears. The Irish Spaniard, Catholic, back, belly, and sides, would not have hesitated to ignore her husband's instructions. She must have come from London, for George the historian, an Agnostic like his master Gibbon, would have buried his father as the will directed, if he had not been overcome by his mother, who, of course, would like to conceal the fact that she had married a man of such certain Protestantism that at the last he had chosen to be buried in a Protestant cemetery.* I should like to know who was at this funeral, and if the historian came over from London to attend it or remained gadding about Holland House, or courting Louisa Browne, whom he afterwards married in spite of the fact that it was her uncle or her brother who secured the conviction of John Moore, the historian's brother. That marriage would have added another grief to the old merchant's many griefs.

A portrait of Louisa hangs in the dining-room, and she appears in it as a voluptuous young woman wrapped in gauze, and by her hangs the portrait of her uncle, Lord Altamont, a copy of the portrait by Reynolds in Westport House. Both

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*Mr. Dennis Gwynn begins his biography of my friend Edward Martyn with the statement that Mr George Moore comes from the same good old Catholic stock Mr Gwynn is himself a Catholic and, no doubt, it pleases him to attribute any small talent I may have to an imaginary Catholic ancestor, Catholics not having produced a book worth reading since the Reformation.

are indifferent works, but there is a good picture in the dining-room at Moore Hall, a portrait of my grandfather painted in 1836, certainly not earlier, and therefore not a Raeburn. Nor is it a Catterson Smith, who was painting at that time in Dublin, for his thick, heavy touch is nowhere visible in grandfather's portrait. The drawing is sure, almost unconscious, revealing an old man with white hair growing scantily about a high forehead, and though no books are in the background, we divine a library and a life sheltered from every misfortune. Who could have painted the portrait? Wilkie, perhaps. He was painting about that time. But there are few life-size portraits by Wilkie, and in none that I have seen is the drawing so thoughtful, nor does he show much interest in character except in this portrait. He seems to have said in it all that my grandfather tells us about himself in his preface to the *French Revolution*. A very remarkable portrait, no doubt, and for a long time I sat struggling with an idea that would not come into a phrase: that the picture and the preface might be compared to the music and words, opera and libretto, something like that. But it would not come, and I got up and took the preface out of the drawer.

Preface to my Historical Memoirs of the French Revolution, to be Published after my Death.

August 20, 1837.

I, this day, complete my sixty-fourth year. I have for come time been engaged in a history of the *French Revolution*. I early in life began collecting books on this subject, and they now fill up an entire side of my very pretty library in this beautiful place. They are most of them bad in style, and worse in spirit and sentiment. There are few of them which I could endure reading were it not for the task I have laid down for myself. This task has the effect of giving interest to the most wretched productions. Any book which offers me a choice of a new fact, or the solution of any difficulty

attached to old facts, interests me, and I find amusement in examining it. Amusement and the banishment of what the French call *ennui* are my principal objects. Beautiful as this place is, and much as I love it, I confess I have not always been able to exclude *ennui* from its precincts. There are hours in which I have not been able to keep it away; general vague reading, without any specific object, afforded me no protection against it, but since I have sat down to my task I scarcely have known what it is. I have a rough copy carried on nearly to the present time. To every written page I have left a blank one, in which I put down any new facts or reflections or news. I wish to go on for some time longer in this manner. But my age, as mentioned at the head of this preface, admonishes me there is no time to be lost if I wish the public ever to have an insight into my history. My rough copy with alternate blank pages it is impossible for any one to make anything of, and it is not till after my death I wish my history to appear, not in the form in which my rough copy exhibits it.

I have several times published, but never with any success, so that I am tired of publication in my lifetime. Besides, as I foresee my history will be pretty voluminous, I do not like the trouble of superintending the proofs. As I am a man of fortune, I leave by my will five hundred pounds to defray the expenses of publication. As the publication is in this manner ordered and appointed by me in my testamentary deposition, no one who survives me will be answerable for anything it contains. I foresee many things I say will give offence, but my objects are truth and my country. As amusement was my great object in undertaking this task, it may be said I have already gained my end in never knowing *ennui* since I began it. But having written a history of the French Revolution, impregnated with all the feelings and sentiments of an Englishman, and written in a style, I hope, purely and thoroughly English, I am ambitious it should be read after me. I have had no celebrity in my life. But a prospect of

this posthumous fame pleases me at this moment. I may say with Erasmus: *Illud certe praesagio, de meis lucubrationibus, qualescumque sunt, candidius judicaturam posteritatem*, though I cannot add with him: *Tametsi nec de meo seculo queri possum.* Having missed the applause, and even notice, of my age, I ought, perhaps, to be indifferent about the opinions of those that follow; their applause, should I ever gain it, will not reach me when the grave has closed over me. This is true; but we are so made that while we are living we think with pleasure that we shall not be forgotten after our deaths. The nature of this feeling is beautifully expressed by Fielding in a passage which Gibbon has transcribed in the account of his own life. What adds to my wish that my history should be read after my death is that I am convinced no account of the great event of the French Revolution in all its parts will be fair and impartial coming from a Frenchman, none certainly will do justice to my country. I am anxious to have the merits of the Duke of Wellington duly appreciated as having done more in war than any captain that ever existed. He entered on the contest with more disadvantages on his side, as will be explained in the history. He had greater difficulties to encounter, and arrived at more glorious results. Though not a Frenchman, I am perfectly acquainted with the French language, and there are few Frenchmen better informed with respect to the history, literature, and what are called the statistics of France than I am, so that I conceive myself perfectly well qualified, as much as any Frenchman, for the task I have undertaken. In this improved copy which I am now transcribing, I break the history into chapters, with a view to the grouping of the facts of which it consists. It is this which I call grouping that distinguishes the task of the historian from that of the annotist, and there is no point of greater importance in a history than the manner in which this grouping is executed. The deficiencies of some celebrated historians in this particular may be noticed. . . .

How abruptly it breaks off! Some pages must have been

mislaid! and I sought among the litter in the drawer, and finding none, returned to my armchair full of regret that grandfather had not written a biography instead of a history, for such sincerity, such simplicity, such humility, are qualities that are rarely met with except in masterpieces. Some writers, it is true, have adopted humility as a literary artifice, but grandfather is not aware that he is humble; his prose dreams and unfolds like clouds going by. In speaking of Moore Hall I might have said that it stood on a pleasant green hill, with woods following the winding lake, and attributed the melancholy of the people to their mountains, but my grandfather merely says, In this beautiful place, and the reader's imagination is free to remember the place that has seemed to him the most beautiful. Grandfather is able to accept his own failure without attributing it to circumstances, writing that if his history should gain the applause of those that come after him, it would not matter to him, the grave having closed over him. But we are so made that while we live we think with pleasure that we shall not be forgotten after our death. This feeling, he adds modestly, has been beautifully transcribed in Gibbon's account of his own life. For this modesty and for many other reasons I love my grandfather, and like to think of his life flowing on uneventfully for three or four more years in the pretty library, and then his ashes being carried to Kiltoome, where the applause of the world can never reach him. . . . But by what right do I publish his preface without his history, perhaps perturbing his rest, for we are not sure that the dead cannot hear us. The Colonel, who has inherited his grandfather's taste for history, should edit the French Revolution. He began reading it, and finding it entertaining, he gave me the preface, remarking that our grandfather had managed to escape notice even in his own house, which was indeed the case. Our mother used to say that when his wife opened the door of his library to consult him, or to make pretence of consulting him regarding the management of his property, he would

answer, My dear Louisa, all that you do is right, and on these words the old man would drop back into his meditations.

One's first memory is generally of one's mother, but my grandmother was the first human being that came into my consciousness, a crumpled lady of sixty-five, who introduced me to gingerbread nuts, which, however, she did not allow me to eat. And this incident may have impressed her upon my mind; but now I come to think of it my second memory is of her. She fell one day as she was coming downstairs, and I remember William Mullowney and Joseph Applely carrying her to her room, and from that day onward she lived in two rooms in the charge of nurses, carried out on fine days in a sort of sedan chair. And not only my first and second memories, but my third is of her I remember my father sitting at a small table writing letters by the bed on which his mother lay. He never spoke of her afterwards. And to me it seems strange not to speak of those we love, but that was my father's way. He never spoke of his mother or his brother Augustus, whom he loved next to his mother, and when I asked him about what books my grandfather had written, he answered, Some histories, leaving me in doubt if he had ever read one of them. But he must have looked into the huge manuscript, for five hundred pounds were left for its publication, and he should have edited it. But my father did not appreciate the old gentleman who wrote histories in the room overlooking the lake; he liked his mother, and all the charming letters that he wrote from school were sent to her, and it was to her, and not to his father, that he sent his Latin and English verses, for between sixteen and seventeen he seems to have had literary ambitions. But as soon as he went to Cambridge he became interested in horses, hounds, and a lady whom he met at Bath. All this the Colonel will write excellently well in his life of our father, for he seems to understand our father's character, though he hardly knew him, and shows a surprising appreciation of the antagonism which arose between mother and son as soon as the son had

left school. Our father had inherited his character from her (perhaps that is why he loved her), an obstinate, impetuous character, and he had also inherited from her a taste for letter-writing which followed him through life to the very end, and the letters that mother and son exchanged about the debts the son incurred at Cambridge and about the lady that he wished to marry are very violent, and every quarrel was followed by a violent reconciliation. A time of great storm and stress rolled on until he felt that another quarrel with his mother would be more than he could bear, so he went away to Russia, journeying through the Caucasus, getting to Asia Minor, how, I know not, meditating on the nothingness of things and on suicide as a respite from the torture of existence. His diary breaks off suddenly, to be taken up again two years after; all we know of these two years is that they were spent in the company of a man and his wife . . . no doubt the lady he met at Bath, who married soon after my father's flight, and travelled with her husband in the East

The gentlemen of 1830 all had Byronic adventures, I said, and fell to thinking of the illegitimate daughter that was born to him. My mother told my sister that she had seen the lady; my father had pointed her out, saying, She is my daughter. She married and died childless, an old woman, not very long ago, and it seems a pity, and rather harsh, that we should never have met, for it is quite probable that I might have liked her better than my legitimate relation. There can be no doubt that we should have been great friends, and I pondered the charm of an illegitimate relation, especially a sister, and my father whom I did not recognise in the avowal he is reported to have made to his wife. A reticent man he was, especially reticent about the dead, loquacious only about his journey to the East. . . . It was probably the part of his life that was most real to him.

After dinner Joseph Applely always brought up tea to the summer room, and my father drank a large cup sitting by a round rose-wood table, on which stood a Moderator lamp;

and that he did not eat bread and butter or cake with his tea never ceased altogether to surprise me. After tea my mother read a novel in an armchair, and as soon as my toys ceased to interest me I clambered on my father's knee and begged him to tell me stories about the desert and the oases where the caravan had rested on its journey from Palestine to Egypt. My father had been obliged to go to Egypt to get permission to measure the Dead Sea and to survey the coasts, and I listened round-eyed to the tale of how the guides, discovering that the Christian dogs were chalking out the way along the passages inside the Pyramid, threatened to extinguish the torches. His voyage down the Nile was a great delight to me, and between the age of six and seven I was quite familiar with the Blue Nile and the White Nile, and had many times mourned the death of a monkey. The poor little fellow tumbled out of the tree, and putting his hand to his side looked up so plaintively that my father declared that for nothing in the world would he shoot another monkey. The story that I liked best was the bringing of the boat from Joppa on the backs of mules to the Dead Sea, and not satisfied with knowing the story myself, I wished everybody else to hear it, and very often embarrassed my father by insisting that he should tell his visitors that the mules could only totter a few hundred yards, so heavy was the boat, and then had to be changed, and that he had let down eighteen hundred feet of line without touching bottom, the water being so dense that the lead would not sink any farther. And I took care that he should not skip the account of the storm that had arisen and the great fright of the Arabs at the waves; or the explanation that on any other sea except the Dead Sea the boat would certainly have been wrecked. But the best story of all was of a man whom he met walking about some world-renowned ruins with a hammer in his hand. Standing before a statue he would say, You've had that nose on your face for many thousand years, in one second you'll have it no longer. Whack! and away went the nose. No sooner had he finished

the tale than he had perforce to tell the story of the merchant who used to go out at nightfall to seek European travellers, and if he saw one who looked as if he had money to spend, he would approach him and whisper in his ear that he if came up a by-street with him he would show him a real Khorassan blade. The celebrated smithies of Damascus had been removed to Khorassan, and the Khorassan blades were being imitated for the European market, and one day the merchant related that he was no longer put to the expense of having new ones made. He had agents in Paris and in London, and whenever these imitation swords came into the market they were purchased for small sums and sent out again to be sold after nightfall for large prices. If you can let me have one of these blades, my father answered, I should like to take it home. No, said the crafty Persian, I have none left, but I have a real Khorassan blade which I should very much like to sell you.

Khorassan or imitation I know not, but many swords, scimitars, and daggers were brought back, and Arab bridles looking like instruments of torture; and these were kept in a great press in my nursery, which I was forbidden to open. But a child cannot be gainsaid on his birthday, and my dearest wish was gratified when I was dressed as a Turk, and rode about the estate flourishing a Khorassan blade above the head of my pony. The success of the ride encouraged me to pursue my inquiries into Eastern costumes and customs, and my father's diaries were examined—not the text, that was too difficult for a child, but the camels with which the text was embellished. His eyes were keen, and with a lead pencil, hard and sharp enough to have won all Ruskin's admiration, he followed the long, shaggy, birdlike necks, the tufted and callous hides, and the mobile lips of these bored ruminants, the nonconformists of the four-footed world. The Arab horse never seems to have once tempted his pencil; and it is difficult to find a reason, for he must have had some wonderful horses. He used to tell me of a journey from Jerusalem to Jeddo in

a single day; the horse was very tired at the end of it, but he pricked up his ears and began to trot as soon as he caught sight of the town.

The only portrait of a horse that he ever attempted was a large water-colour of Anonymous—a very painstaking piece of work, of which he was a little ashamed, I think, preferring to turn the conversation from the drawing to the race itself. The horse was going very well when he turned a shoe. I wanted him to say that the horse would have won had it not been for the accident, but I could not get him to say that, and remember going to Joseph Applely, a taciturn, clandestine little man whom there is no necessity to describe here, for he is described in *Esther Waters* under the name of John Randal, to find out the truth—whether Anonymous would have won the Liverpool if he had not turned a shoe. He had done some riding himself, and was disposed to be critical, and he thought—well, it is difficult to remember exactly his criticism of my father's riding, for he had a habit of dropping his voice and muttering to himself in his shirt-collar, mumbling and turning suddenly to his press, that wonderful press in which all things could be found. It was out of that press that *Esther Waters* came, out of the stable-yard and out of my own heart.

Oscott College had demonstrated, to the satisfaction of my unhappy parent, that it was impossible to teach me to write a clean, intelligible letter, and in despair he allowed me to apply myself to the study of life. At Moore Hall there was no life except the life of the stable-yard, and to it I went with the same appetite with which I went to the life of the studio afterwards; if I had remained at Moore Hall I certainly should have ridden many steeplechases, and perhaps succeeded in doing what my father had failed to do. A pretty indulgence it would be for me now, sitting here, surrounded by Impressionist pictures, to look back upon the day at Liverpool when the flag fell and we raced for the bit of hard ground, numbers of us coming down at the first

fence, myself, however, escaping a fall, and then away off into the country . . . three miles, over how many fences? And then the jump into the race-course and the three-quarters of a mile over hurdles. A pretty memory all that long way would have been for a man who has written a line of books, and I should certainly have had some such memory to play with if my father could have restrained himself from asking the electors of Mayo to send him to Parliament to ride for Repeal of the Union. They answered that they would; the horses were sold, and my dream of doing on Slievecarn what my father had hoped to do on Anonymous died in South Kensington, where we had taken a small house at the corner of Alfred Place, opposite South Kensington Station, a pleasant suburb then, thinly populated.

The Exhibition Road was building, and it was at the corner of Prince's Gardens that we met Jim Browne, the painter of the *Crucifixion* that hangs in Carnacun Chapel, in the roof high above the altar. I can remember him painting in the breakfast-room, and Tom Kelly coming to stand for the figure of Christ. The angels on either side of the cross Jim had painted no doubt out of his head; I had often wondered how he had been able to paint them, and the great picture that my father used to describe to me in the summer room, the great picture entitled the *Death of an Indian Chief*, a tribe of Indians reining up their horses at the edge of the precipice over which the horse bearing the dead chieftain springs madly into space. The day we met him in the Exhibition Road Jim told my father that he and his sisters were living in Prince's Gardens; he invited us to come and see his pictures on the following Sunday, and during the intervening days I could neither think nor speak of anything but Jim Browne, asking my father all the while why Jim was not the greatest painter in the world since he had painted a tribe of Indians; how many pictures? fifty, sixty, a hundred? He did not think they were so many. Twenty, thirty, forty? And if he could paint so many, why will not the Academy

hang his pictures? Are the pictures he paints now not as good as the *Death of an Indian Chief*? My father suggested that Jim did not finish his pictures sufficiently for the Academy, and tried to explain to me that Jim's drawing was defective. But it was difficult for me then to understand that a man might paint a tribe of Indians reining up their horses at the edge of a precipice and yet not be able to draw, and in bed at night I lay awake thinking, waiting for the day to come.

Father, where is Prince's Gardens? Is it the first turning or the second? Do you think you will be able to persuade Jim Browne to use models? And if he does, will the Academy accept his picture in May?

II

Myself, an elderly man, lying in an armchair listening to the fire, is a far better symbol of reverie than the young girl that a painter would place on a stone bench under sunlit trees; myself trying to remember if it were on our way back from Prince's Gardens or a few days afterwards that I begged money from my father to buy drawing materials, remembering everything but the dates—that a pencil was never out of my hand, and that as soon as family criticism was exhausted, professional criticism was called in. Jim was invited to dinner. But a bad cold kept me in bed, terrified lest my drawings should be forgotten. As he descended the staircase, voices reached me, and when the front door closed I listened, expecting somebody to come up to tell me what Jim had said. But nobody came, and when I went shyly to my mother next morning her news was bad; after dinner my sketches had been shown to him, but he did not seem to think much of them, and on my pressing my mother to tell me more I dragged the truth from her that he considered girls riding bicycles showing a great deal of stocking a low form of art.

He only likes Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Rubens, my father said, and he invited me to come to the National Gallery, and I followed him from masterpiece to masterpiece, humble and contrite, but resolute in my persuasions that he must come with me to Drury Lane and buy some plaster casts. He seemed to look upon the money thus expended as wasted, and when he came to the bedroom that I had converted into a studio he glanced round the walls shocked at my crude attempts to draw the Venus de Milo, the Discobolus, and some busts. He did not refuse to send me to the Kensington School of Art, but he sent my brother with me, and this jarred a little, for I looked upon my wish to learn drawing as a thing peculiar to myself, and my brother was so subaltern to me and seemed so utterly unlikely to understand a work of art that I looked pityingly over his shoulder until one day the thought glided into my mind that his drawing was as good as mine, if not better. And if that were so, what hope was there for me to become an artist, an exhibitor in the Royal Academy? an exhibitor of pictures like Jim's Julius Caesar overturning the altars of the Druids? For even if I did learn to draw and to stipple, it did not seem to me that I should ever be able to imagine figures in all positions as Jim did, and I despaired.

Youth is a very unhappy time, Art and sex driving us mad, and our parents looking upon us with stupid unconscious eyes. My father must have been ashamed of his queer, erratic son, and could have entertained little hope that eventually I would drift into a respectable and commonplace end. We all want our children to be respectable, though we may not wish to be respectable ourselves, and as he walked to the House of Commons, a short, thick-set man with a long, determined mouth set in a fixed expression, his hands moving in little gestures to his thoughts, he must have often asked himself what new caprice would awaken in me. Would I tell him that I had decided to take up literature or music as a profession? There was no knowing which would be my next

choice, and either was equally ridiculous, for in me at that time there was as little idea of a tune as there was of a sentence. It was impossible for me to grasp the different parts of speech or the use of the full stop, to say nothing of the erudite colon. As he turned me over in his mind he must have remembered his own brilliant school-days, coming sadly to the conclusion that I must go into the Army, if he could get me into the Army, that very sympathetic asylum for booby sons. So that our soldiers may not be altogether too booby, the War Office has decreed a certain amount of ordinary spelling and arithmetic and history to be essential, and to get such as I through examinations there are specialists. Somebody must have exalted Jurles above all men, for my father came home one evening with the news that Jurles had pushed men through who other tutors had said would never be able to pass any examination, and would never get their livings except with the labour of their hands. The record of this thaumaturgist was seventeen hundred and fifty-three, and my father reflected that if there were miracles that even Jurles could not perform, he would at least redeem Alfred Place from the annoyance of seeing me trick-riding on a bicycle up and down the street. And Jurles would also save me from the Egertons, and daughters of a small tradesman living in Hammersmith, whither some other wastrels and myself were wont to go to sup on Sundays. Alma and Kate were on the stage, and photographs of Alma in tights and Kate in short skirts were left about the house, and disgraceful letters turned up in the blotting-book in the drawing-room; he was a man of action rather than words, and putting a season-ticket into my hand he bade me away to Jurles's in the Marylebone Road, to one of the little houses lying back from the main road.

As I passed up the strip of garden under the aspens I often caught sight of Jurles's old withered face blotted against the bow window, and very often met his wife, a tall and not ill-looking woman about thirty; she seemed to be always going

up and down that pathway, and at that time almost anything was enough to waken an erotic suggestion, and I began to wonder if she kept trysts with any of the young men sitting on either side of the long mahogany tables bent over their books and slates. It seemed to me that there was warrant for the supposition, for as soon as old Jurles finished a lesson he went to the window and stood there, his bald head presenting an irresistible attraction for flies, a dangerous attraction, for Jurles was quick with his hands. It is probable that Mrs. Jurles's trysts were with the butcher, baker and grocer, for besides the half-dozen young men who arrived at ten o'clock every morning, Jurles took in several boarders, and there were never less than ten men sitting down to the midday meal, among them Dick Jurles. We all respected old Jurles, a distant, reserved gentleman and knowledgeable beyond the limits of his craft, but we laughed at Dick for his long red whiskers and moustaches, and his vulgar and familiar manners. We used to charge him in private, on what foundation I know not, probably none, with being a money-lender's tout, and no one cared to take a lesson from him, feeling him to be a fake, one who had acquired just enough education to overlook our sums or to construe a Latin text with us, feeling that if he were to ask a question we might place him in a quandary. The seventeen hundred and fifty-three young men that Messrs. Jurles had passed into the Army owed their success to the diligence of his brother and to the solemn Swiss who taught modern languages in the back room. Out of it he came every hour, a red handkerchief hanging out of his tail pocket: I will trable you now, and, my chair tilted, I used to watch him, wondering the while what kind of death each one of his pupils would meet on the battle-field, worried by the thought that my lot might be to die in defence of my country, or be wounded in her defence, which was worse still. It seemed to me that myself was my country, but having no alternative to propose to my father I accepted the Army. All professions were equally repugnant to me; I could not

see myself as a doctor or as a barrister, or anything except perhaps a gentleman rider. I did not dare to tell my father that I would not go into the Army; it did not occur to me to say to him: You went to the East for five years, and when you returned home did little else but ride steeplechases. In many little ways I lacked courage and preferred procrastination to truth. I could not be put into the Army unless I passed the examination, and I realised that to miss passing no more was necessary than to read the *Sportsman* under the table, and spend most of the afternoon at the tobacconist's round the corner—an affable man with a long flowing moustache like Dick Jurles's, and some knowledge of betting, enough to have a book on the big races, laying the odds in shillings with his customers, cabbies from the rank; and while he teased out the half-ounces of shag we discussed the weights, the speed, and the stamina of the horses; we laid the odds and took them, and at the end of the half-year I had won five or six pounds. One day Lord Charlemont mentioned a horse as certain to win the Derby—Pretender, wasn't it? The tobacconist bet in shillings, half-crowns, and dollars, but he would take me round to the public-house and introduce me to the great bookmaker who came there to meet his customers on Thursdays and Fridays. Pretender won, and the Monday after the race the great bookie invited me behind the urinal and took ten five-pound notes out of his pocket, fifty pounds, a sum of money that enabled me to eat, drink, and smoke on terms of equality with Colville and Belfort, two young men who were fast becoming my friends—Belfort, a handsome, high-class, little fellow, bright brows and brown hair, a high-bridged nose, the mouth a little pinched, the chin a little too forward, sharp teeth, a pale complexion, and a high voice. He was going into the cavalry, and lived with his mother and sister at the top of the Albert Road, and as I lived at the bottom of the Exhibition Road it made very little difference whether I took Exhibition Road or Albert Road; there was a short cut at the end round by some cottages with thatched roofs,

which have long ago disappeared. We made friends in this walk, and he asked me to dine with him, and we went to the theatre; later he introduced me to his mother and sister, and a very distinct picture these two women have left upon my mind: the mother frail, reserved, and dignified, with fair hair, about to turn grey, parted in the middle and brushed on either side of her thin temples. She must have worn a long gold chain, and she was always in black. The daughter had her brother's high-bridged nose, and her manner was showy—the opposite of her mother's—and I liked to find them sitting on either side of the fireplace after dinner. Now Colville was quite different from Belfort, a south Saxon if ever there was one, his ancestors having been on the land probably since Hengist and Horsa came; a man of medium height, of good trim figure and military bearing, for his thoughts were always on the Army, and his talk was of tunics and of buttons and epaulets, and very proud he was of his great military moustache which he stroked pensively with his little crabbed hand. He was often at Truefitt's getting his hair shampooed and cut closely about his small well-turned head and narrow temples, and from Truefitt's he often walked to his tailor's; he had thirty-six pairs of trousers when I first knew him, and his charm was his cheerful disposition and his somewhat empty but merry laugh.

He was the first man I had ever met who kept a woman, but that was a secret, and Belfort used to wonder how he did it on five hundred a year; he told us that he gave Minnie Granville three, reserving two for himself, and if he ran short he returned to Buckingham and lived free of cost till his next quarter's allowance allowed him to return to the clandestine little home in St. John's Wood. We envied him his lady, and on fine afternoons used to leave the confectioner's shop where we had luncheon and go forth to St. John's Wood for an hour before returning to Jurles, and the two of us would loiter, admiring the greensward shelving down to the canal's edge, wondering if Minnie Granville were true to Colville;

we wished Colville well, but we remembered that if she remained faithful to him she would never become a celebrated light-o'-love, and we should be deprived of the honour of having known her in her early days. We had heard that Mabel Grey lived in Lodge Road, and turned into it wondering which house was hers, and, not daring to inquire, we searched South Bank and North Bank, and, talking of her ponies, we gazed at the pretty balconies, hoping to catch a sight of her or her great rival, Baby Thornhill. Everybody knew these two ladies by sight, for photographs of Baby Thornhill and Mabel Grey were everywhere, in every album; and many other beautiful women were famous. Lizzie Western, the sheep, as she was called—a tall woman with gold hair and a long mild face—and Kate Cook, too, was as famous perhaps as any, Mabel Grey always excepted; Kitty Carew, Margaret Gilray, and Sally Giles her cousin, lived in South Bank, and were often on their balconies tending their birds, giving their canaries and finches seed and water; a favourite bird was a mule goldfinch and canary, a green-brown bird that would take seed from his mistress's pretty tongue Belfort brought opera-glasses one day, and that day we were happy boys; the pony carriage was at the door. We shall see them get into it if we wait. Belfort wanted to get back to Jurles; and I should not have been able to persuade him to remain if the ponies had not presented a peculiar attraction—fiery chestnut mares, foaming at the bits, and swishing their long tails, a dangerous pair for ladies' hands to drive through crowded streets; and the longer they were kept waiting the more restive they became, rearing over against the little groom, or striking out with their hind legs. And as soon as the ladies stepped into the carriage, before Sally was seated, they bounded forward, overthrowing the groom, and what disaster might not have happened if we had not rushed forward to their heads it is impossible to say.

The ponies have not been sufficiently exercised, that is all, Miss Gilray, and I begged Belfort to soothe Miss Giles, who

was very much frightened. It would have been splendid to offer to drive the ponies into Regent's Park and bring back Spark and Twinkle chastened, but Belfort said that we must be getting back to Jurles, and we regretfully bade them good-bye. It seemed to us the merest politeness to call next day to inquire, and we were received by the cousins, platonically, of course. But even boys get their chances, and the idea came to Sally Giles to invite Belfort and me to supper, and to come to Jurles's herself with the invitation, stopping the ponies before Jurles's establishment and sending her little groom up the pathway with the note. I was at the window, and how my heart beat at the sight of him! Wearing the livery of his mistress proudly, he stopped Mrs. Jurles, who was coming down the pathway at that moment with her white Pomeranian dog, and after a talk with her, old Jurles called me aside and began his lecture: he could no longer consent to waste my father's money, and felt constrained to inform him of the company I kept. But, Mr. Jurles, the ponies were kicking, my father would never have spoken to me again if I had not gone to their heads, and Miss Giles was so frightened. Old Jurles seemed to accept my excuse as valid, and, although it was quite out of the question that such ladies should send their grooms with notes to his front door, still the incident might be overlooked were it not that I showed no disposition to learn anything since I came. He reminded me that he had frequently to take the *Sportsman* out of my hand. I was glad to hear from him that there was no chance of my passing for the Army, but I wished him to withhold this opinion from my father; and after some debate he promised me that I should have another chance. You must mend your ways, he added. But it was only by reading the *Sportsman* under the table that I could escape from the horrid red tunic with buttons down the front, and the belt, and if I were caught with it again Jurles would write to my father, and every day I expected to see him coming toward me with threatening brow, and to hear him say, I have received a very bad account of you from

Jurles. There was some justification for my fears, for he wore a troubled look, and I caught him in whispered talk with my mother frequently; they ceased talking or spoke of indifferent things suddenly, and one night after dinner I heard him say that he was going to Ireland by the Mail. The reason of this sudden departure was not mentioned, and my mother was so often agitated that her fluttered voice caused me no alarm; my father's sudden return from the front door to give me a sovereign did not awaken a suspicion; it seemed, however, to strike my mother's imagination, and a few days later a wire came from her brother summoning us to Moore Hall.

Something dreadful must have happened! she kept repeating to herself, and her talk was full of allusions to a letter she had received from my father. At last she confided to me that he had written to her saying if she did not get a wire from him on a certain day she was to come at once. We got the morning papers coming off the boat, and there was nothing about him in them, but the absence of news was not enough to reassure her, and I felt there was something on her mind of which she did not dare to speak. She does not appear again in my memory till we arrived at Balla. Her brother was waiting outside the gate, and I saw him take her aside and heard him say: Mary, prepare for the worst; George is dead.

We climbed on the car—Joe and my mother on one side, the driver sat on the dicky, and I remember his back showing all the way against a grey sky and my mother wrapped in a brown shawl. Joe Blake is not so distinct to me, only his yellow mackintosh. Every now and again I heard the wail of my mother's voice, and I sobbed too, thinking of my father whom I should never speak to again. At the same time I was conscious, and this was a source of great grief to me, that my life had taken a new and unexpected turn. In the midst of my grief I could not help remembering that my father's death had redeemed me from the Army, from Jurles, and

that I should now be able to live as I pleased. That I should think of myself at such a moment shocked me, and I remember how frightened I was at my own selfish wickedness, and a voice that I could not restrain, for it was the voice of the soul, asked me all the way to Moore Hall if I could get my father back would I bring him back and give up painting and return to Jurles? I tried hard to assure myself that I was capable of this sacrifice, but without much success, and I tried to grieve like my mother. But I could not.

We never grieve for anybody, parent or friend, as we should like to grieve, and are always shocked by our absent-mindedness; at one moment weeping for the dead, at another talking of indifferent things or asking casual questions as to how the dead man died. And we only remember certain moments. At will I can see myself and Joseph Applely in my father's bedroom standing together by the great bureau at which he wrote, and in which he kept his letters, and I remember how my eyes wandered from Joseph to the empty bed. He had been removed to the next room, or perhaps he had died in the marriage bed; however this may be, Joseph Applely told me that when he came to call the master, he was lying on his back breathing heavily, and thinking that it would be better not to disturb him he had gone away, closing the door quietly, and when he returned an hour later the master was lying just as he had left him, only he could catch no sound of breathing. So much do I remember precisely, and somewhat less precisely, that Joseph Applely told me he had sent for the doctor. A dim thought hangs about in my memory that the doctor was in the neighbourhood; be this as it may, the reason assigned for death was apoplexy. Two, three, or four days went by and I remember nothing till somebody came into the summer room to tell my mother that if she wished to see him again she must come at once, for they were about to put him into his coffin, and catching me by the hand, she said, We must say a prayer together.

The dead man lay on the very bed in which I was born,

his face covered with a handkerchief, and as my mother was about to lift it from his face the person who had brought us thither warned her from the other side of the white dimity curtains not to do so. He is changed, she said.

I don't care, my mother cried, and snatched away the handkerchief, revealing to me the face all changed. And it is this changed face that lives unchanged in my memory, and three moments of the next day : the moment when Lord John Browne bade me good-bye on the way from Carnacun (the body had been brought there for High Mass and was being carried back to Kiltoome, a cold March wind was blowing over the fields, and he feared the journey round the lake) ; the moment when Father Lavelle called upon the people to hoist him on to the tomb for him to speak his panegyric ; and the moment when the mason's mallets were heard closing the vault where the dead man would remain with is ancestors, one would like to say for centuries, but nothing endures in this world, not even our graves. I cannot remember who spoke after Lavelle, and afterwards the multitude began to disperse through the woods and along the shores of the lake, a great many lingering on the old stone bridge to admire the view. Of course I was very principal, and as I passed up the road I felt many eyes fixed upon me, and conjectured that they were all wondering how much of my father's talent I had inherited, and if I would take up the running at the point where he had dropped out of the race. Among the hundreds of unknown there was here and there a known face ; our carpenters, sawyers, gardeners, and stablemen—all our servants came from Derrinanny and Ballyholly, the villages beyond the domain over the hill along the lake's edge. And of course, I did not escape the inquisitive gaze of the men that used to row me about the islands when Lough Carra was my adventure, and they were probably thinking what I would do for them when I came to live in Moore Hall ; and after these men were other faces known to me, but not so well known, the beaters whom I had seen rousing the wood-

cock out of the covers of Derrinrush, and it seems that when I turned from the Dark Road and walked up the lawn some of the old tenants spoke to me. I have some recollection of being spoken to at the sundial, and I think their questioning eyes reminded me that the house on the hill was mine, and they who spoke to me and those who did not dare to speak were mine to do with as I pleased. Until the 'seventies Ireland was feudal, and we looked upon our tenants as animals that lived in hovels round the bogs, whence they came twice a year with their rents; and I can remember that once when my father was his own agent, a great concourse of strange fellows came to Moore Hall in tall hats and knee-breeches, jabbering to each other in Irish. An old man here and there could speak a little English, and I remember one of them saying: Sure, they're only mountaineymen, yer honour, and have no English; but they have the goicks, he added with unction. And out of the tall hats came rolls of bank-notes, so dirty that my father grumbled, telling the tenant that he must bring cleaner notes; and afraid lest he should be sent off on a long trudge to the bank, the old fellow thrust the notes into my father's hand and began jabbering again. He's asking for his docket, yer honour, the interpreter explained. My father's clerk wrote out a receipt, and the old fellow went away, leaving me laughing at him, and the interpreter repeating: Sure, he's a mountaineyman, yer honour. And if they failed to pay their rents, the cabins they had built with their own hands were thrown down, for there was no pity for a man who failed to pay his rent. And if we thought that bullocks would pay us better we ridded our lands of them; cleaned our lands of tenants, is an expression I once heard, and I remember how they used to go away by train from Claremorris in great batches bawling like animals. There is no denying that we looked upon our tenants as animals, and they looked on us as kings; in all the old stories the landlord is a king. The men took off their hats to us and the women rushed out of their cabins dropping curtsies to us until the

'seventies. Their cry, Long life to yer honour, rings still in my ears; and the seignioral rights flourished in Mayo and Galway in those days, and soon after my father's funeral I saw the last of this custom: a middle-aged woman and her daughter and a small grey ass laden with two creels of young chickens were waiting at my door, the woman curtsying, the girl drawing her shawl about her face shyly. She was not an ugly girl, but I had been to Lodge Road and had seen Jim Browne's pictures.

Everything was beginning for me, and everything was declining for my mother. She would have liked to linger by her husband's grave a little while, but I gave her no peace, urging the fact upon her that sooner or later we should have to go back to London. Why delay, mother? We cannot spend our lives here going to Kiltoome with flowers. An atrocious boy as I relate him, but an engaging manner transforms reality as a mist or a ray of light transforms a landscape, and my mother died believing me to have been the best of sons, though I never sacrificed my convenience to hers. It will be admitted that that is the end we should all strive for. But the means? Ah, the means! An ancient saw this of ends and means which it will be well to leave to others to disentangle.

Awaking from a long reverie, I asked myself where I had left off, like an absent-minded old woman telling a child a story. At the part where every day spent in Moore Hall after my father's death was like a great lump of lead on my shoulders. My mother's grief increased day by day; and if her health were to break down we might be kept at Moore Hall for months. It was important to get her back to London, and I think it must have been in the train that she heard the Army had never appealed to me; I had only consented to accept the Army because I had nothing else to propose to my father; it was painting that interested me, and a studio was sought as soon as I arrived in London. My aspiration did not reach as high as a private studio; the naked was my desire, and a drawing-class would provide me with that. No ex-

amination was required at Limerston Street. Barthe, a Frenchman, ran the little show, of which Whistler was the attraction, and as soon as the model rested I picked my way through the easels and stood at the edge of the crowd that had collected round the famous artist. His drawings on brown-paper slips seemed to me to be very empty and casual, altogether lacking in that attitude of mind which interested me so much in Rossetti. His jokes were disagreeable to me; he did not seem to take art seriously, but I must have disguised my feelings very well, for he asked me to come to see him; any Sunday morning, he said, I should find him at 96 Cheyne Walk. The very next Sunday I went there, but there were few pictures in the studio, and I was left to look upon the melancholy portrait of his mother which he had just completed, and gathering nothing from it I turned to another picture, a girl in a white dress dreaming by the chimney-piece, her almost Rossetti-like face reflected in the mirror. Swinburne had translated her languor into verses; these were printed round the frame; and while I read them Whistler discoursed to his friends on the beauty of Oriental art, and his praise sent me to the Japanese screen, but I could discover no correct drawing in it, and begged one of the visitors to tell me how faces represented by two or three lines and a couple of dots could be considered to be well drawn. He gave me a hurried explanation, and returned to Whistler, who laughed boisterously whilst rattling iced drinks from glass to glass; and I think that I despised and hated him when he capped my somewhat foolish enthusiasm for the pre-Raphaelite painters with a comic anecdote.

I left his house irritated, and somewhat ostentatiously neglected him at the class, allying myself openly and defiantly to the next celebrity, for our class boasted of another, Oliver Madox Brown, son of the great Ford Madox Brown, a boy that came from Fitzroy Square, bringing with him such a reputation for genius that he paid no attention whatever to Whistler—a strange boy, stranger even than I: a long fat body buttoned

in an old overcoat reaching to his knees, odd enough when upright, but odder still when crouching on the ground in front of his drawing-board, his right hand sketching rapidly, his left throwing black locks of hair from his face, of which little was seen but the great hooked nose. I could not keep him out of my thoughts, for he seemed to me even more unfortunate than myself, less likely to win a woman's love. At last my passion to know him overcame me, and I dared to speak to him. He engaged immediately in conversation just as if he wished to become my friend, and agreed to walk back to South Kensington with me. I remember the care with which I picked my words during this walk, and my object being to win him it seemed to me to be perfectly safe to ask if he were in the life-room in the Academy. My surprise was great when he answered that he had no time to spare for the Academy, all his mornings being employed upon his six-foot canvas, the *Deformed Transformed*, and wondering how he managed to give visible shape to an idea so essentially literary, I asked if he could explain his composition to me. He said that he would prefer to show me his picture, and I promised to call at Fitzroy Square, but delayed going there from day to day lest too much desire to see him and his picture might wean him from the willingness he had shown for my acquaintance; and it was not till he asked me why I had not been to see him that I summoned sufficient courage to take the train to Gower Street. Before me on the door-step was a handsome middle-aged man, somewhat thick-set, with greying hair and beard, who said to me, You have come to see Oliver, haven't you? divining one of Oliver's friends in me.

We met at the class in the Fulham Road, and he asked me to come and see his picture. And you are Oliver's father? I added, the great painter. For I recognised Oliver in the handsome and kindly eyes.

Yes, yes, and he turned on the landing to ask me if I would care to come into his studio before going to see Oliver. Does he, then, think so much of Oliver that he puts him

before his own pictures? I asked myself whilst he pulled the easels forward and showed me his pictures. If I may make a remark, I said aloud.

Pray do, he said.

Your hands always seem a little heavy, but perhaps that is your style, as long necks are Rossetti's.

He laughed in his beard, and we ascended the great sloping staircase. He paints in the morning, said the adoring father, and writes in the evening when he doesn't go to the class. A volume of poems was mentioned, and I asked if the manuscript had gone to the publisher. Oliver hesitates about sending it. Swinburne and Rossetti are publishing poetry, and all the literature of the pre-Raphaelite movement has hitherto gone into verse. He drawled on, telling me that Oliver had finished a prose romance of about three hundred and fifty pages and was about to begin another, and a volume of short stories was mentioned. I ventured an inquiry, and the great painter quoted from his advice to his son: Oliver, don't waste your time on short stories. You have your six-foot canvas in the morning and your novels and poems in the evening.

I was too overwhelmed to give any answer, and Oliver paid no heed to his fond parent's admonishment. He seemed to take it for granted that he was not like other men, and I understood that having heard himself so often spoken of as a genius he had accepted the fact of his genius as he had come to accept the fact that he could speak and hear and walk. But I, who had been brought up in the belief that I was very stupid, was astonished at my extraordinary good fortune in having met Oliver and won his good opinion. After all, come what may, this wonderful father and still more wonderful son had thought me worth speaking to for a while, and then, remembering that Oliver was writing a novel, I begged him to read me some of it if he weren't too busy. He hesitated and might have been tempted if his father had not reminded him that luncheon would be ready in a few minutes. Father

and son were condescending enough to ask me to stay to lunch, but I did not dare to say yes, and descended the stairs regretting my shyness. On the door-step, while trying to summon up courage to say, On second thoughts I'll come back to lunch, I besought Oliver to bring his manuscript down to the class and read it to us during the rests. He promised to do so, and the following day when Mary Lewis left the pose and wrapped herself in a shawl (a shapely little girl she was, Whistler's model; she used to go over and talk to him during the rests), Oliver began to read, and Mary sat like one entranced, her shawl slipping from her, and I remember her listening at last quite naked. And when the quarter of an hour had gone by we begged Oliver to go on reading, forgetful of Whistler, who sat in a corner looking as cross as an armful of cats. At last, M. Barthe was obliged to intervene, and Mary resumed the pose.

Après tout, je ne veux pas que mon atelier devienne un cours de littérature, he muttered.

But we were thinking of the story, and begged Oliver to take up the reading again at the end of the sitting, and Whistler went away in high dudgeon, for Mary stopped behind to hear how the story ended. And a few months later we crowded together, forgetful of the model, telling how typhoid had robbed England of a great genius; and after Oliver's death my interest in the class declined.

III

Our advancements are broken or delayed by unexpected returnings to our beginnings, and my story is that a young man whom I had known at Jurles's asked me to visit him for the hunting season, and that I met a man at his house who had a horse running at Croydon but was without a jockey. So it was natural to me to propose myself, and rely on Joseph Applely's promptitude to send me my father's racing breeches

and boots, which he did; and the farce was gone through of taking them down to Croydon, though the owner had written saying that he intended, or half intended, to scratch the horse, his warning serving no purpose, for we are all mummers, and life being but a mumming, it was pleasant to think of myself taking all the jumps, the water-jump especially, in front of the stand. But to do this it was necessary to go down prepared, the breeches and boots in a brown-paper parcel under my arm, the parcel helping me to realise myself as a steeplechase jockey. No doubt that with some luck I should have got the horse round the course as well as another, but the owner having scratched the horse, and the day being wet and the Ring a couple of inches deep in mud, the result of that Croydon meeting was for me a severe cold that prevented me from taking my driving-lesson from Ward, one of the great coachmen of that time, a lesson that I sorely needed, for I had engaged to drive a coach down to Epsom.

All the same, on four lessons this feat was accomplished, the horses meeting with no serious accident, and, encouraged by my luck, a few weeks afterwards the same party was invited by me to a great gala dinner at Richmond, and while the coach was being led over several hillocks through the furze bushes on to the dusty road, for in the darkness we had wandered into Wandsworth Common, one of my guests said to me: You mustn't think of giving up driving; your luck will never desert you. But four horses galloping on Wandsworth Common in the middle of the night! Margaret Gilray whispered to her cousin, Sally Giles. I wish we were safely at home.

These excursions passed the summer away, and in August Sally and Margaret were bidden good-bye. Belfort's brother, who was going to be married and wished to make a splash before doing so, had hired a lodge in Ross-shire. He had invited his brother, and his brother had been allowed to invite me; a great event this was, and hours were spent at the tailors' considering different patterns; at the hosiers' turning

over scarves, neckties, and shirts of many descriptions, frilled and plain; and when my mother said that I could not have both a dressing-case costing fifty pounds and a pair of guns, I decided to have the dressing-case and to send to Moore Hall for my father's muzzle-loaders, and though forty years have gone by, I can still smile at the astonishment that the guns inspired in the Ross-shire shooting-lodge. And when it was noticed that the locks were noiseless, Captain H——, who had been told off as my companion on the morrow, was soon interested in them, and spent most of the evening with a toothbrush trying to clean them, succeeding at last in producing a faint clicking, but not enough to convince him that he would be safe while shooting with me. It were better, he thought, to lend me one of his guns, and the breech-loader, the first that I held in my hands, was held fairly straight, and my bag was numerous for a boy of my appearance and conversation. Captain H—— had begun to feel that if by chance my bag were the bigger, he would be wickedly chaffed, and this misfortune might have happened to him if the boots that had won my fancy in the Sloane Street shop-window had not begun to break up, the pretty clasps and buckles being unable to resist the tough Ross-shire heather.

I can't think how you ever came by such boots. Where did you get them? They are as wonderful as your guns! How do you contrive to hit off the extraordinary?

And I told him that it was not until the last moment, between six and seven in the evening, that I remembered I had forgotten to order any shooting boots. My feet, you see, being as small as a woman's, the ready-made shooting boots in the Brompton Road were too large for me; all the shops were shutting, I was getting frantic when I saw a line of boots in a shop-window in Sloane Street marked Ladies' Boots for the Highlands! They'll fit me, I said to myself. You see they do, only——

I shall have to take you round to-morrow to the local cobbler.

The noiseless locks, the ladies' boots, and the admission

that I was always in love supplied the Ross-shire shooting-lodge with matter for humorous conversation, and as I sat before my fire in Ely Place I heard my nickname, Mr. Perpetual. To be ridiculous has always been *ma petite luxe*, but can any one be said to be ridiculous if he knows that he is ridiculous? Not very well. It is the pompous that are truly ridiculous. A random thought carried me out of Ely Place across the years to Lodge Road, and I can see myself and the company and the room: a round table on which are beef and salad, Cheshire cheese and beer, the supper provided by the fair cousins. Canaries are shrilling in their cages, and the bow-window is hung with rep curtains, and the sofa, too, is rep. There is wax fruit on the sideboard, and Sally and Margaret wear the tight bum-revealing dresses that succeeded the pious crinoline. Side-whiskers have not disappeared altogether; Belfort and myself, Humphries and Norton—two cavalry officers—are shaved only to mid-cheek. Incident after incident rises up and floats away like cigarette smoke, one incident retaining my attention a little longer than the others—the evening that Belfort refused to smoke one of my cigars, saying that he preferred to smoke one of his own manillas. He lighted one, and it was just beginning to draw when, impertinently, I tore it out of his teeth and flung it into the fire. A joke it had seemed to me, but he rushed for the poker and would have brained me with it if I had not slipped round the table and seized Colville's sword and, unsheathing it in a moment, warded off the blow aimed at my head, and seeing another coming, it occurred to me that the best way to save myself would be to run Belfort through, and he would have received a thrust that might have done for him if one of the cavalry officers had not armed himself with a chair. The sword sank in the upholstery, and by that time Belfort had recovered his temper, and a few minutes after he was smoking one of my cigars in token of reconciliation. One of the cavalry officers asleep on the sofa is another memory that Time has not rubbed away, and Margaret coming to sit on my

knees, perhaps because she had been warned not to inflame Mr. Perpetual. Her dressmaker had brought home a beautiful blue tea-gown that evening; she was wearing it for the first time, and its folds of corded silk floated over my knees. The very weight and shape of her are remembered, and our inquietude whether the officer was shamming sleep or was asleep. The tea-gown had seemed to me the very painting robe that I needed, for art was never altogether out of my mind, and I had been thinking for some time of Saturn sitting in the shady sadness of a vale as a subject for a picture that my poor dead Oliver would have liked to paint. It would have been of no avail to offer it to Jim Browne, for he could not draw from Nature. A few months later I discovered another which he would have carried out if he had lived: the Witch of Atlas calls to Hermaphroditus, and I could see his wings catching the fainting airs bearing the boat up the shadowy stream to the austral waters beyond the fabulous Thamondacona, without, however, being able to arrange the figures so that they filled the canvas—the sinuous back of the witch, her arm upon the helm, looking up at Hermaphroditus; and one day Jim Browne was implored to say what was wrong with the composition.

Give me your palette and go upstairs and dress yourself. Take off that ridiculous garment, he added, thereby humiliating me, for Margaret Gilray's tea-gown had seemed an excellent painting robe, an advance on the smock which Jim wore in his own studio. But it would be henceforth discarded, for Jim was now my mentor, my hero, my boon companion. It was my pride to be seen in Piccadilly with this fine Victorian gentleman whom I recall best on a wintry day; he never wore an overcoat, but buttoned his braided coat tightly about him and swung a big stick. Long flaxen locks fell thick over the collar, and his pegtops blew about in the wind; he was known to everybody as Piccadilly Jim or Piccadilly Browne, I have forgotten which. We met everybody between Hyde Park Corner and St. James's Street, and Jim saluted his

acquaintances with a How are you? never a How do you do? He very rarely stopped to speak to any, but strode on quickly, mentioning the name of the passer-by, and I could but try to fix in my memory the appearance of the notable, regretting that Jim did not stop, that I had not been introduced. He liked to quiz me, and sometimes there was plenty of reason for mockery, and sometimes there was none, but in either case he quizzed me, turning some simple phrase into ridicule, as when I mentioned, regretfully—perhaps it was the note of regret in my voice that caused him to laugh at me—that my hair was yellower than his. How he used to drag out the word yellow, making me feel dreadfully ashamed of myself, until at last summoning up courage, I asked him if there was anything foolish in what I had said, and to my surprise he answered no. Then why had he been laughing at me all this while? and I listened to Jim again, for he was now asking, out of politeness—he always decided these questions—whether it would be more amusing to dine at the St. James's or at Kettners' or at the Café de la Régence. It did not matter which. In whichever he might choose I could learn his taste in food, and my hope was that with practice I might acquire it; his taste in everything seemed essential, especially in women, and to make myself more perfectly acquainted with it, I drew his attention to the ladies dining at the distant tables, never daring, however, to hazard an opinion unless one seemed to realise all the ideals of beauty set forth in his pictures, and if he deigned to approve of any woman's face and figure at Cremorne Gardens or in the Argyle Rooms, I used to mark her down for future study. My mistakes were numerous, and I was ashamed if he caught me talking to a woman whom he did not admire, and very proud if my choice met his approval, as it happened to do one day in the Park. I had stopped to speak to Kitty Carew, letting him walk on in front, and on overtaking him half-way down the pathway, he said: Yes, indeed, a very pretty woman. You were in luck, George, when you picked her up.

Jim's satellite I was, but given to wandering out of my orbit. There were other companions whom Jim looked upon contemptuously—the Maitlands—and Jim's contempt was shared by my gaunt Irish servant, William Mullowney, who used to enrage me when he came into the drawing-room with his Sor, Mr. Dhurty Maitland has called to see you. It was quite true that Sydenham presented a somewhat neglected appearance, but however just William's criticism might be, he could not be allowed to speak to me of my friends with contempt. This Derrinanny savage must be sent back to Moore Hall, I said. But a moment's indignation does not add much to my story; I must tell how I made Sydenham's acquaintance.

When we arrived from Mayo we had gone to live in Thurloe Square, in the house of a very genteel lady who did not let lodgings but who might be persuaded, so the house agent had said, to let us have her drawing-room floor and some bedrooms for five or six guineas a week. She often asked me into her parlour and talked to me about her connections and the neighbourhood, and, seeing I was at a loose end without companions, inspired by some connection of ideas, she said one day she would introduce me to the Maitland boys, the sons of a retired stipendiary magistrate from Athlone. The mother was a wonderful pianist, the boys were all clever, the three younger sons had a room to themselves at the bottom of the house where they painted scenery, wrote verses, and composed music. William and Dick, the two older brothers, had taken the Lyceum Theatre, and were going to produce *Chilperic*, a comic opera by Hervé. She tapped at the window and Sydenham came in, and his news was that a letter had arrived that morning from Hervé. He was coming over to play the title-rôle himself. Everything is relative, and at that moment of my life it was very wonderful for me to go to the Maitlands' house and to hear the scores of *Chilperic* played by Sydenham and his mother. We received boxes and stalls from the Maitlands, and after a run of nearly six months,

Chilperic was taken off to make way for the composer's later opera, *Le Petit Faust*. But it did not please as much as its predecessor, and the theatre had to be closed. Dick had, however, managed to escape bankruptcy; half a success guarantees that another door shall be opened to the retiring manager, and in the 'seventies, a few months after my father's death, he brought over the entire company from Les Folies Dramatiques to play in French, *Chilperic*, *L'Œil Crevé*, *Le Canard à Trois Becs*, and possibly *Le Petit Faust*. He sent me seats whenever I asked him, and I used to sit in the stalls learning all the little choruses and couplets night after night, admiring Paola Mariée, a pretty and plump brunette, who sang enchantingly as she tripped across the stage, and Blanche d'Antigny, a tall fair woman who played the part of a young shepherd. She wore a white sheepskin about her loins, and looked as if she had walked out of Jim's pictures. I learnt from Dick that she was a great light-o'-love, sharing the Kingdom of Desire with Hortense Schneider and Léonie Leblanc.

It was well to sit in the stalls as Dick's guest, and it would have been wonderful to accompany him through the stage door on to the stage, and be introduced to the French actresses to whom he spoke in French every night. But I could not speak French, and I vowed to learn the language of these women, who disappeared suddenly like the swallows, leaving me meditating what lives they lived in Paris, until Dick's new theatrical venture, a translation of Offenbach's *Brigands*, put them out of my head. For he had collected in the Globe Theatre the most beautiful women in London to form the corps of the *gendarmerie* that always arrived an hour too late to arrest the brigands; and one of the attractions of the piece was Mademoiselle d'Anka, a beautiful Hungarian, who sang Offenbach's little ditties bewitchingly, and a song that Arthur Sullivan had written for her, *Looking Back*. Madame Debreux, a pretty brunette whom Dick had brought over, for he loved her, was in the cast, and Nelly Bromley, who was loved by the

Duke of Beaufort, was in it too. A lovelier garland was never wreathed, and there was no lovelier flower in it than Marie de Grey, who never kissed any one except for her pleasure, and yet managed to live at the rate of three or four thousand a year. There was a woman who wore a green dress in the second act; her nose was too large, but her thighs were beautiful; and there was a pretty, tall, fair woman, whom I ran across in Covent Garden on her way to the theatre, and whom I took to lunch. She would have loved me if my heart had not been engaged elsewhere, but, as usual, I abandoned the prey for the shadow. And the shadow was the stately Annie Temple, who dared not listen to my courtship for dread of the rage of her fierce cavalry officer, a stupid fellow who snarled at me once so threateningly at the stage door that Annie must fain refuse me her photograph. Dot Robins's mother sold me one for a sovereign, and from it I painted many portraits. Jim painted one from memory, mentioning again and again while he painted it that Annie was as tall as Mademoiselle d'Anka, whose acquaintance he had made on her arrival in London, before the theatre opened. It was he who introduced me to her, and he was glad now that I was able to get free seats at the Globe, and disappointed that Dick would not allow me to bring him behind the scenes. I should have liked to chaperon him, but it was a feather in my cap to leave him sitting in his box and skip away to the dressing-rooms, and when I returned we would lay our heads together trying to discover which was the handsomer woman, Annie Temple or Marie de Grey. Annie, in his opinion, was the finer woman, being as big, in fact, as Alice Harford, and he confided to me then and there that he used to meet Alice in a most romantic nook at the end of a little paved alley off the Fulham Road. He believed her to be in keeping and unfaithful only with him; all the same, she proposed one night at Cremorne to meet me at the nook; and, delighted with my success, I could not refrain from telling Jim all about it, just to take him down a peg. But the result of this indiscretion

was that Alice did not come to the nook at the time appointed, and I walked down the paved alley meditating that once again I had missed the prey for the shadow. And, as if my punishment were not enough, Jim continued to talk of her beauty, telling that her legs were shapelier than Mademoiselle d'Anka's; they did not go in at the knee, and this great beauty, or this great fault, formed the theme of many conversations in the studio in Prince's Gardens; Boucher's women did not go in at the knee, but Rubens's did, and laying his palette aside, Jim would throw himself on the sofa and tell me for the hundredth time that the only women worth loving were tall women with abundant bosom and flaxen hair, the only women that men with a sense of the beautiful could admire.

But long before this my guardian, Lord Sligo, wrote Jim a letter which brought him round to Alfred Place, and sitting on the edge of the table he read it to my mother, saying that if she agreed with Sligo's strictures, there would be nothing for him to do but to refuse to see George any more, and if she didn't agree with Sligo, the best thing would be to write to him saying that she thought Sligo was mistaken Foreseeing that Lord Sligo would read any such letter from her as Please mind your own business, my mother hesitated, but I insisted, feeling that Jim's friendship was necessary to me. All the same, Lord Sligo's letter was not without avail. It stimulated Jim to moralise, and when I called in the afternoon to ask him if he would come up to Piccadilly to dine somewhere, and go on to the Argyle Rooms, he would read me a long lecture on the dangers of women.

The strong and healthy man refrains from women, and when I asked him if he always refrained from them himself he said he refrained as long as he could, and advocated a strong and energetic life to me. He said he would like to see me shoulder a gun and go away; not to Scotland to shoot grouse, but to Africa. Every young man should go forth and lead a natural life. Abyssinia was often mentioned, and to

discover the source of the Nile was held up to me as an ambition suitable to my health and my fortunes. I should come back a far finer man than I went out. Alice Harford and Annie Temple were probably given to us so that we might resist their seductions, which were very trivial to a man who had got anything in him. And if Abyssinia and the source of the Nile appeared too slight an adventure, there remained the Sahara and the Mountains of the Moon and Timbuctoo, where no European had been, but which a determined man might reach, and in his imagination Jim would roam through the great equatorial forests, filled, he said, with cities, relics of a civilisation that had passed away, now inhabitated only by lions, and to encourage me to accept an African adventure he would pull out a picture of a troop of elephants plunging through some reeds into a river while a gorilla disported himself on the branches of a dead tree. This led us to consider the exploits of Du Chaillu, who had shot the first gorilla. The animal had approached thumping his breasts with his fists, and the sound that he produced was that of a big drum. Du Chaillu had, however, knelt unmoved, saying to himself, Not yet. The gorilla approached another ten steps, and Du Chaillu said, Not yet; and again the gorilla approached, and Du Chaillu said, Fire! and the gorilla rolled over dead at Du Chaillu's feet after twisting the rifle as if it were a bit of wire. Jim admired such nerve as this, and it recalled to him an excellent shot he had made years ago when he was staying at Moore Hall. He had said he would like to shoot a marten, and had taken a rifle with him; martens were rare even at that time, but he had caught sight of one at the end of a branch, and had shot it, and the incident had inspired him to think that he would like to wait for a lion in the moonlight at the foot of a tree. A moment like that is worth living for! And exalted by the thought he would seize his palette and paint Cain amid the rocks by the sea under a darkening sky, his arm thrown about his sleeping sister, a spear within his right arm; and as if the terrific lion stealing

down upon him were not sufficient terror, Jim would sketch a lioness and her whelps in the background. As all the beasts in the picture were roaring, Jim roared in accompaniment, while whirling a mass of vermilion and white upon his palette; and then, uttering a deep growl, he would rush forward and a red tongue would appear; and when he had mixed emerald green with white he would advance some paces, cat-like, and then, snarling, would leap forward, and a moment after a great green eye started out of the darkness.

He retreated to watch the effect of his work, and in the frenzy of creation, soliloquised, explaining to himself, and to me, the reason why his pictures were refused by the Academy. The art that the Academicians catered for was a meanly realistic art, and for them to accept his picture of Cain defending his wife from wild beasts, the lion's mane would have to be painted from the bearskin rug, every hair put in; and the dove that Jim's memory of Alice Harford had rescued from Cupid and which she clasped to her bosom, would have to be studied from a dead pigeon sent round from the poulterer's.

Alice's great blonde body was finely conceived, and the movement of her shoulders bending over the eager boy was well enough, somewhat rudimentary, but better in a way than the frigid sophistications that pass for art in Burlington House. If he had nothing else he had the sense of the noble and the beautiful, but was he speaking the whole truth when he said that the Academicians would hang the picture if every feather were imitated from real feathers? Did he believe it to be as well painted as the Correggio in the National Gallery? Was the modelling of that shoulder altogether faultless? Was it not emptier than the Correggio? Was not the Correggio more real? At that moment it became clear to me that the feet were not as beautiful as those in the bright picture of the Italian master, and that Jim could not make them as beautiful, for he had not learned to draw and to paint from Nature. If he had gone to the Academy schools and subjected his genius to discipline, he might have been the great painter of modern

times; but I could not see Jim attending the Academy schools, drawing patiently from the model, working out the shadows with a stump. My thoughts must have stopped there if they ever got quite so far; and now the explanation of the enigma seems to me that Jim was one born before due time and out of due place, in Mayo in 1830. For his talent to have ripened fully he should have been born in Venice in 1660. His mentality was of that period, and his appearance coincided with his talent—splendid shoulders, fine head upreared, an over-modelled brow, a short aquiline nose, proud nostrils, long languid hands. But why enumerate? A portrait by Van Dyck.

Get out of my way, he cried, and squeezing out the best part of a tube of raw umber on his palette and breaking it with a little black, he whisked in the lion's tail, and with another brush sought out the yellow ochre and the Naples yellow, and Cain's wife received such a dower of tresses that I was thrilled. It was my sense of the voluptuous and romantic that drew me to Jim and his pictures, and I remember him crossing the room one day and seeking among the canvases and returning with a small one, six feet by four, in which a brown satyr overtook a nymph at the corner of a wood. My eyes dilated and I licked my lips.

The best thing you have ever painted in your life, Jim. Why do you turn it away to the wall?

He murmured something about his sisters who sometimes came into the room unexpectedly, and throwing himself on the sofa melted into another of those long soliloquies very dear to me at that time—a flow of talk of Michael Angelo, Rubens, and Raphael; and mixed with his remembrances of the pictures he had seen in Italy were remembrances of pictures and statues that he had modelled and painted himself, the colossal statue of Caractacus that he had exhibited in London when he was seventeen, and the great picture of the Battle of Arbela, forty feet wide by twenty feet high, containing several life-size elephants. At that time he had painted

and modelled in the same studio, leaving the picture for the statue and the statue for the picture, and, my admiration roused, I begged him to tell me where were these pictures and this statue ; but without answering my question he broke into a criticism of Ary Scheffer's picture of the Devil offering Christ the Kingdom of Earth if he would cast himself down and worship him. Christ raises his hand and the gesture portrays the famous words, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, while the Devil points downward.

The two men are speaking at the same time.

And in your picture, Jim ?

Christ listens while the Devil offers him the earth, he answered, and he did not speak again for a long time so that I might better appreciate his genius. An intense moment of appreciation was when he said that no gallery in the world afforded so many beautiful pictures to his sight as did a dirty ceiling. He had only to half close his eyes to see Last Judgments finer than Michael Angelo's, and if he closed his eyes a little he could rediscover his Battle of Arbela.

The lost picture, I said. But, Jim, the satyr overturning the nymph ; is he visible in the ceiling above your head ?

Jim laughed.

Perhaps not in this ceiling, but in the ceiling above the little sofa at Alice Harford's.

These lapses of humour jarred a little, and I was glad when he lowered his eyes from the ceiling and remained quite still considering the picture of the nymph and the satyr, and I thrilled again when he said, That picture has all the beauties of Raphael and other beauties besides. In youth one likes exaggeration, and in response to my cry for Art Jim said: If you want to learn painting you must go to France.

His words were like All ashore; the vessel moves away, but so slowly that one does not feel it is moving, and three weeks after my arrival in Paris I wrote to Jim from the Hôtel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire, asking him if he would come over and stay with me ; I had a room which I did not use and he was

welcome to it. But he wrote saying that he could not come over to Paris at present; and I was very much hurt by his ironical thanks for the room which I could not use. But it is the room that one does not use one offers a friend, not one's own bedroom, I said, and continued to consider his rude letter, wondering what had provoked it, without being able to discover any reason. Some months later he wrote again, this time in French, and to prove to *mes camarades d'atelier* that it was possible for an Englishman to write French I took the letter out of my pocket, and while they scanned it, picking out the English locutions, it struck me that if Jim was mistaken about his French he might well be mistaken about his pictures. And to convince myself of their worth I described the compositions to Julian—*Julius Caesar Overturning the Altar of the Druids*, *The Bridal of Trierman*, *Cain Shielding his Wife from Wild Beasts*—and Julian listened indulgently over many cups of coffee. He was becoming my intimate friend, allowing me to take him out to dinner and to treat him to the theatre; I was a little personage in his circle when a tall young man came into the studio late one afternoon—Lewis Welden Hawkins it was—and as we went with him to the café to drink a bowl of punch (the custom of the studio was that every new-comer should stand a bowl of punch), he turned and spoke to me in English, asking me, after a few remarks, if we had not met in Jim Browne's studio.

The name of Jim Browne carried me back to Prince's Gardens and to the moment when Jim introduced me to a tall young man whom I did not altogether like, so contemptuous was he of Jim's genius, and of me when I invited him to come forward and tell me what he thought of *Cain Shielding his Wife from Wild Beasts*. He was Jim's cousin, and therefore in a roundabout way my cousin; he had come over to London with a young Frenchwoman whom he called Louise, and I remembered Jim saying: I hope you have turned out something, meaning that he hoped that Lewis had painted a picture, for he had left the Navy to study painting; but the

young man had answered, I don't know if I have turned out anything, but I have turned up a good deal, an answer which displeased me. There was no time to remember any more We had arrived at the café; the conversation had become general, and the first thing that was borne in upon me was that Lewis spoke French like a Frenchman; his thoughts moved in the language, which was not extraordinary, since he was born in Brussels, and when we returned to the studio the whole studio gathered about his easel and admired his audacity, for he had sketched in the model and the entire background—the stove that kept the model warm, the screen behind which he dressed and undressed, and the yellow curtain which sheltered him from draughts. The elders, Renouf and Boutet de Monvel, saw through Lewis's facility; to them it was merely *du chic*, Ignorance giving itself airs, but to me who could not express myself at all, and who spent a whole week stuttering and stammering through a wretched drawing, the hour's work on Lewis's canvas was almost as wonderful as one of Jim's pictures.

His manners were winning and easy; he crossed the studio with a deference proper in a new-comer, and seating himself in front of my drawing he advised me. And at five o'clock, when the studio closed, we went away together in a carriage, for he wanted to show me his studio, which was far away behind the Gare du Nord, too far to walk; moreover he was in a hurry. But he seemed to forget his hurry when we reached the Place Maubeuge, remembering suddenly that he had to see Louise, who lived in the Rue Maubeuge. And it being always pleasant to see a woman, I was disappointed when the concierge said that Madame was not at home. But another friend of his lived up the street. She was not at home either, so he scribbled a note in the concierge's lodge, and bethought himself of another. She too was out; *mais si monsieur veut monter . . . la bonne est en haut.* No, he was in a hurry. He scribbled another note; we dashed into the cab again. But he must speak with—— We jumped out, and in the middle

of a low-ceilinged room he engaged in conversation with a lady who came from her bedroom somewhat flurried in a peignoir She spoke to me in English, but as soon as she turned to Lewis she dropped into French, which she seemed to speak very well, for I noticed that instead of saying *Vous avez tort*, as I should have said, she said *Je vous donne tort*, a phrase which I did not know and kept chewing all the way to his studio, while he confided to me that he was now living with an English girl who had come over with a theatrical company to Brussels. He was expecting her to call for him, so there was female society to look forward to, and the carriage drew up at the door of the house in which he was living.

You won't have to go up many stairs. I am on the *entresol*, he said. His studio was a large room with a great fireplace, in which he had hung an iron pot on a chain. The fireplace had cost seven hundred and fifty francs ; seven hundred and fifty francs represented no actual sum of money to me ; it was a pitiful thing to have to turn francs into pounds and to have to ask if any cooking was done in the pot, for of course I should have known that the pot and chain were decorative effect, as were the Turkish lamps and draperies, as indeed everything in the room was, including Lewis himself, especially when he took a fiddle from the wall and began playing.

Stradella's *Chant d'Église*—do you know it ?

Alas ! I didn't, and after hearing it my wonderment increased, for Lewis said that he did not know a note of music, but had met a vagrant once and had picked up some knowledge of the fiddle in half an hour. He soon wearied of the fiddle, and going to a small organ he strummed snatches of Verdi's *Requiem*, till a young girl entered the room out of breath.

Lewis !

She stopped suddenly on seeing me, and turning his head he introduced me to a beautiful girl, and one in the bloom of her first beauty, a tall girl of seventeen or eighteen, with brown eyes and fair hair. She had come to fetch Lewis to dinner,

and it occurred to me that she might be disappointed at finding me with Lewis. But he assured me they would be glad of my company if I didn't mind dining at Alphonsine's. Not the least. But who was Alphonsine? An old light-o'-love, he said, who gathered all her friends around her *table d'hôte*, at three francs and a half. His supercilious style delighted me, and he left me talking to Alice while he crossed the street to order some coals at the *charbonnerie*, and he looked such a fine fellow, as he stepped from one paving-stone to the other, that Alice could not restrain her admiration.

What a toff he is!

A toff he was, not a tailor's toff, but one of Nature's toffs, a tall, thin young man and yet powerful, his long arms could no doubt deal a swinging blow on occasions, and in a race his long legs would have carried him past many a competitor. His shoulders were ample, and his small face was not spoilt by a broken nose. He must have told me how his nose was broken; I have forgotten; but in my memory of him it contrasts happily with the soft violet eyes, giving character to the face—a face which absorbed and interested me all the evening, my eyes returning to him again and again as he leaned across the table telling stories in fluent French, delighting everybody, the men as well as the women, assembled under the awning.

What is he saying? Alice asked me. I could not tell her, alas! He thinks he is such a fine man that all he would have to do would be to strip himself naked and walk into a woman's room for her to fall down and adore him.

I begged her to tell me about Marie Pellegrin.

You admire her, don't you? Well, she'll cost you a thousand francs; but if you were a *voyou*——

What's a *voyou*?

A cad—you could have her for nothing.

And if she is rich why does she come here? Are all the women here worth a thousand francs?

Alice laughed scornfully and broke off the conversation,

and applied herself to trying to understand what Lewis was saying.

I wonder why she came here. She must have left the Grand Duke.

What Grand Duke ?

All dukes are the same. Do hold your tongue.

Lewis told me afterwards that Marie had been to Russia and had had hundreds of thousands of francs from the Grand Duke, but she liked *les voyous du quartier* better, and returned to them when she was bored. She had just come back from Russia and was spending her earnings in the Rue Breda, and, intoxicated with the romance of the story, I begged of Lewis to tell me more about her. But he had told me all he knew, and Alice sat very much annoyed, for she was just as pretty a girl as Marie Pellegrin, and if she had had the luck to be introduced to Grand Dukes she would know how to put her money to better use.

We were in a victoria, for Lewis had proposed an excursion to Bullier, and a train of cabs crossed Paris, over the bridge down the Rue du Bac and round the Luxembourg. But I cannot write with the same insight and sympathy of the Bal Bullier as I did of the Élysée Montmartre, in the story entitled *The End of Marie Pellegrin*. I am of Montmartre kin, and Bullier, unhallowed by memories, rises up a mere externality, a crowd pushing through the tables and chairs set under trees, sweating waiters doing their best, and the band under cover, a sort of exaggerated shed into which one walked from the garden. I never danced at Bullier, and it matters little to me that the finest can-can dancers assembled there; polkas and waltzes were looked upon as a kind of waste of time, but the moment the band struck up a quadrille, a crowd formed in dense rings, and the merits of the kickers were discussed as eagerly as the toreadors in Madrid and Seville. The grisettes of the quarter advanced kicking furiously, and about one in the morning the company separated through the Latin Quarter, the Montmartrians returning by

themselves, for nothing was more rare than for a Montmartrian to bring a grisette back with him, the girls being with one accord faithful to their quarter.

Lewis and Alice dropped me at the Hôtel de Russie, going on themselves to the Rue St. Denis, somewhere between the Boulevard Sebastopol and the Gare du Nord, I think. My last words to him were, You'll be sure to be at the studio to-morrow, for I was anxious that Julian should see my cousin's picture, and I can see myself still bringing him round to Lewis's easel. An instinctive fellow Julian was, divining at once a useful ally in Lewis, and, to make sure of him, Julian proposed a few weeks later that we—Lewis, myself, Julian, Renouf, Boutet de Monvel, and a few others—should take the first boat next Sunday morning to Bas Meudon. The landscape painters, he said, would find some pretty motives along the banks of the Seine ; the others could go for a walk, and I remember that Renouf and Boutet de Monvel went off together, and returned an hour later saying that they had found nothing that tempted them. Whereas Lewis had been immediately struck by the picturesque ascension of the staircase leading up from the river to the village. Was it jealousy that stayed them from admiring his facility ? I asked myself, for they did not seem to admire the picture that Lewis had nearly completed on a panel ; bestowing only a casual glance at it, they began to talk about breakfast ; but Lewis could not be persuaded to lay aside his palette overflowing with bitumen and cadmium yellow ; he continued to add bits of drawing, and I to admire the perspective and to wonder how he did it ; Alice watched him from under her sunshade, and Julian caught my serious attention when he said : All that facility will go for nothing if he doesn't come to work at the studio. We found the others waiting for us at the door of the restaurant, very impatient, and to my delight our table was laid under a trellis, and the green leaves and the white table appealed to my imagination and the cutlets and the omelettes linger in my memory, and the races that we ran in the evening

when the bats came out, Lewis beating me a little in one race, for his legs were longer, but only just beating me, whereupon one whose name I cannot recall challenged me to race him for a bottle of champagne, and Lewis whispered, Take him on; you'll run away from him. And to my surprise Lewis's judgment turned out right; my competitor gave up after a few yards, we drank his champagne, and the boat took us back to Paris, all a little conscious that the last lights of a happy day were dying—a day that I felt I should never forget. We shall be thinking of this day when we are old men, I said to Lewis, and was ashamed for a moment of my emotion. He had not heard, he was talking to Alice. The night gathered about the green banks of the Seine, and the dim poplars struck through the last bar of light which seemed as if it could not die; the month being June, it lingered between grey clouds till the boat had passed under the first bridge. . . .

And then, bridge after bridge, the landing, the separations, each one returning to his bed, his mind filled with remembrances of blue air, and flowing water, and swaying trees. Did Alice return with Lewis? I think so. She was certainly with us a few weeks later, for Lewis had caught sight of a picturesque corner, and was full of scorn of Renouf and Boutet de Monvel who had missed it, and we three returned to Bas Meudon for Lewis to paint it. But the Seine was so sunny the morning we arrived that a swim suggested itself to Lewis, and a boat was hired, and a boatman rowed us to the near side of an island. Alice, who could not swim at all, remained in the shallows with me, who could swim only a little, and splashing about together we watched Lewis disporting himself in mid-stream, breasting the current, head upreared, turning over on his side and rushing through the water like some great fish. We admired him until he passed behind the island; and then Alice would have me teach her to swim. We were getting on nicely when, in sport, I threatened to duck her. She screamed to me to let her go, and as soon as I lost hold of her she went under, coming up unconscious, though

she had not been under the water for more than a few seconds. The boatmen came to my assistance quickly, and Lewis came swimming by, and together we got her into the boat. Good God, Lewis, try to bring her to, I cried, falling on my knees beside her, terribly frightened, for Lewis was so angry with me that I could not doubt that he would pitch me into the river if he failed to revive her. At last she opened her eyes, and after a tender scene between her and Lewis, we rowed back to the inn, where her beauty inspired much commiseration.

A day has been wasted, Lewis said, for his mind was fixed upon the corner he had selected, and he went away next morning without me, the boat not being large enough to hold two painters. You don't want to paint. You had better remain and talk to Alice. But it was impossible to persuade Alice out of her bed, and feeling, I suppose, that I was as negligible a quantity in love as in art she invited me, after some hesitation, into her room ; and we used to gossip there every morning when Lewis went away to paint until gossip busied itself with us, and one day he told us that he was returning to Paris next day. We could see that something had gone wrong, and at last we got the truth out of him. People at the inn had begun to notice that I went into Alice's room as soon as he went out painting. Alice lost her temper quickly ; I protested, and Lewis said: Of course I know she wouldn't have anything to do with you ; all the same, I don't wish to pass for a cuckold. A very rude answer I felt this to be, but held my tongue, and we returned to Paris next day, all three rather angry and disappointed, and Lewis discouraged, for his picture had not turned out well ; it had, indeed, turned out so badly that landscape painting was not mentioned again that summer. And it was not until the fall that he began to speak of Cernay, a beautiful country celebrated among painters, not more than fifty or sixty kilometres from Paris. His suggestion was that we might go there for a week, and I consented, for I wanted to see the inn whose walls had

been decorated by every painter that had stayed there—by every man of talent—for this inn-keeper would not hand over his walls to be daubed by me and my like. And wondering if Lewis were trying to fool me, or if it were really true that Cernay was a relic of the Middle Ages that had escaped civilisation, I asked him if he proposed to pay his bill with a picture, and if the inn-keeper would accept poems from me in exchange for what I owed him. You see now I have told you the truth, he said as soon as we entered the inn, and I looked round the rooms seeing every subject that had ever been treated dashed here and there : seascapes, horses ploughing, battle-pieces, ravens, parrots, ladies in their shifts amid pillows, swine on the hillside, and herds of cattle winding through fields, a birchen wood showing aloft on a hillside which Lewis said was worth all the other pictures put together, and he mentioned the name of the painter of a large flower-piece, and we should have admired his peonies longer if the inn-keeper had not been at our heels waiting for us to choose our rooms. It may have been for reasons of economy that we elected to sleep in the same room. It may have been that the inn-keeper had only one room to offer us. For good or evil reasons we slept in the same room, of that I am sure, for I was awakened in the middle of the night by Lewis trying to find matches to light a candle. He was going into the backyard. A dog began to bark, and Alice sat up quaking, beseeching me to go to Lewis's help and save him from being devoured. It seemed to me that I had better waken the inn-keeper, and, while I was standing in the middle of the floor wondering what had better be done, Lewis returned. The dog had rushed at him, but fortunately was on a chain.

But, Lewis, if you had been within reach, or if the chain had snapped !

And the depth of her passion may be judged from the discussion that arose between her and me as to what one would do if one had to eat something incredibly nasty. Alice's point was that it mattered a great deal from whence

the nastiness came; if it came from Lewis she would sooner eat a pound than a pinch if it came from me, and she woke up Lewis to ask him if he would not return her the compliment, and was very angry when he said that a crap was the same all the world over, and he would prefer to swallow a pinch rather than a pound, no matter who owned it.

We certainly pigged it together, pigs no doubt, but aspiring pigs, who went out in the morning to the borders of the lake to paint, Lewis able to get down a large willow-tree in the foreground, retaining some parts of the view, rejecting others, myself quite uninterested in trying to arrange the lake as Corot might have arranged it, but unable to express myself, fumbling with the beautiful outline of the shore, which I could not fit into the canvas, till Alice, who had not risen so early as we, came to meet us and joined in Lewis's criticism of my abortive drawings, giggling under her parasol and echoing Lewis's opinions.

Of course there must be a willow-tree and a man in a boat to make a picture. Give me your charcoal, and he began to recompose, bringing the edge of the wood into my canvas. Don't you see?

No, Lewis, I don't see; the edge of the wood doesn't come into my vision.

It should come in to make a picture; and he strove hard vulgarising what I had done, and doing this so successfully that in the end he had to hand me back my pencil, saying he was sorry, that perhaps it was better the way I had it. Alice did not think so, and we strolled over to admire Lewis's work, which captured all her admiration. I think that is how Corot would have seen it, he said, and we watched the slate-coloured lake amid its autumn tints and sedges, and returned to Paris a few days afterwards without a picture, to continue——

Good heavens! it is twelve o'clock, and I have been sitting here dreaming since ten! And my eyes went to the large fat volume on the table, not one line of which I had read.

IV

As soon as Teresa had removed the tablecloth my eyes went to a bulky volume, *The Brothers Karamasov*, and, determined to break the back of the story, I threw myself into an armchair, saying: If I read fifty pages every evening I shall soon get through it. And I read on and on through the fifty pages that my conscience had stipulated for, and might have read to a hundred if the endless corridors down which I had been wandering and the great halls through which I had passed had not suddenly seemed to dissolve into vapour. A talent, I said, that appeals to the young men of to-day. The pigmy admires the giant, however loosely his frame may be put together, and our young writers lift their pale etiolated faces to Dostoievsky. We've had enough of art, is their cry, give us Nature, and this book fulfils all their aspirations. It is impersonal and vague as Nature, I said, returning to the consideration of the book, finding myself obliged to admit that I could detect a dribble of outline in Aloysha, as much as may be detected in the ikons on the walls. A man of genius without doubt, on a different plane from our miserable writers of fiction, but inferior to his own countrymen, to one at least, Turgenev, and on the whole inferior to Balzac. Some rough spots there may be in Balzac, some rocks, but rocks are better than marsh, and my thoughts went to the philosophical studies, to *Louis Lambert*, *Seraphita*, *Jesus Christ in Flanders*. These books affected me in times past, but to read them again would be to run the risk of a great disillusion. So why read them? As I took a cigar from the box my thought returned to Paris, and I remembered that in about a year I had begun to pine for London, for the English language, English food, for my mother's house in Alfred Place. Close by it I had rented a studio, in Cromwell Mews, and Millais used to come to see me there, and Jim of course came and talked to me of his compositions; but his influence was a declining one, for in London Lewis was always

by me in spirit controlling me, exciting in me a desire to be loved for myself, prompting the conviction that for a young man to go to Cremorne Gardens or the Argyle Rooms, armed with a couple of sovereigns, was merely to procure for himself a sensual gratification hardly on a higher level than that which schoolboys indulge in. But if he go there with only a few cab fares in his pocket he will be obliged to reconsider himself physically, and those negligences in dress which were the despair of his parents will vanish, his boots will begin to improve in shape and quality, a pin will appear in his necktie, or maybe he will wear his scarf in a ring, his shoulders will take a finer turn, and his head will be upreared above them proudly. And if he would be loved for himself he must cultivate an interesting attitude of mind, he must be able to slough himself at will (his outer skin, I should have said), and take part in wider humanity, in dreams, hopes, aspirations and ideals not strictly his own, only his through sympathy with the lives of others.

The only one who knew me in the days of the Cremorne and Argyle Rooms is dear Edward, and it always interests me to hear him say that I began myself out of nothing, developing from the mere sponge to the vertebrate and upward. I should have liked another simile, for Nature has never interested me as much as Art, perhaps I should never have paid any attention to Nature if it hadn't been for Art. I would have preferred Edward to have said that I was at once the sculptor and the block of marble of my own destiny, and that every failure to win a mistress in the Cremorne Gardens was a chipping away of the vague material that concealed the statue. But the simile would perhaps not have been so correct, for to say that a man is at once the sculptor and the block of marble means that he is a conscious artist, and I was not that in those days; I worked unconsciously. Yes, Edward is right; I developed upward from the sponge, returning to Paris about eighteen months later a sort of minor Lewis, having not only imbibed a good deal of his mind, but

even fashioned myself so closely to his likeness that Julian, who caught sight of me on the boulevard soon after my return, thought for a moment that I was Lewis.

On arriving at the Gare du Nord, the first thing to do was to find Lewis, for without him the evening would never wear away; but the concierge told me that Monsieur Hawkins had left, and that he did not know his present address. . . . Julian took his coffee every evening at the Café Vivienne, but never came before eight; I waited till half past, and then bethought myself of Alphonsine's. Monsieur Hawkins and Madame Alice had not dined there for some weeks. Alphonsine did not know their address; the dinner seemed worse than usual, and the chatter of the women more tedious. At last somebody said that she thought Marie Pellegrin knew Madame Alice's address, but Marie was not at Alphonsine's that evening. . . . She came in, however, a little later, and told me that Madame Alice was living in the Rue Duphot, No. 14, an *appartement au rez-de-chaussée*, and away I went. Madame was at home, but she had a gentleman dining with her.

Monsieur Hawkins.

Yes, the servant answered timidly, and I burst in.

Lewis was glad to see me, and Alice welcomed me with hard empty laughter. Was she glad to see me back again? Or did she fear that painting would distract Lewis's attention from her? However this may be, she welcomed me, and was certainly pleased at my admiration of the fine suite of apartments that I found her in. Yes, I have been going ahead, she said, leading me through the windows into a strip of garden where tall trees were trained up a high wall. She liked my question, Who is the fellow who pays for all this? and I heard the name of Phillipar for the first time, a great name it was then in the Parisian financial world. After going bankrupt for a dozen millions or more, he bought an island in the Mediterranean, and it was he or one of his associates that kept Alice, never coming to see her oftener than once a week, and then only in the afternoon.

So when you hear the servant whisper, *Monsieur est ici*, you'll just skip round to the café and wait.

And I shall find Lewis there, I added.

The remark did not please him, for he was trying to carry off the life he was leading with great airs ; and when I went to him a few days after, seriously alarmed for his artistic future, saying that I had heard in the studio that he had not been there for months, he answered that I had a fixed income, but he had only four hundred francs a month from his mother, and it was not easy to abstract Julian's fees, one hundred francs a month, from four. He had counted upon selling the landscape which we were looking at—a flowering glade in the woods of Ville d'Avray ; but the customer had been called away to South America suddenly. He would come back, but in the meantime. . . . The picture was not finished ; he would like to have done some more to it, but he was so hard up he could not afford the train fare ; and my heart melting at the thought of so much genius wasted for the sake of a train fare, I went away with him to Ville d'Avray, and we found motives and painters in the woods, and strayed under flowering boughs, and returned with two pictures in time for dinner in the Rue Duphot, and a great deal of art talk that was continued during and after dinner till Alice said :

You two have been away all day in the woods, and have no doubt had a very pleasant time, but where do I come in ? you come back here merely to talk painting, and she flounced out of the room, leaving us wondering at her ill temper and how long she would remain away. She appeared in the doorway ten minutes after, and turning on her heel, said, I don't know what you two are going to do ; I am going to the Bois. And you, Lewis, what are you going to do ? I asked, and as Lewis did not dare tell her that he would prefer to spend the evening lounging in her drawing-room, we had to accompany her to the Cascade and sit with her in the café till midnight watching the celebrated courtesans arriving and departing in their carriages. So-and-so is now with So-and-

so ; he gives her a hundred thousand francs a year *et elle le trompe tout le temps avec le petit chose*. She was interested in these details, and not unnaturally, for she was now very nearly in the front rank, and to keep her there we had to take her out every evening. If we did not go to a theatre we went to a music-hall ; the Folies Bergères was coming into fashion at that time, and we were often there till it was time to go to the Mabile. A tedious place of amusement the Mabile always was to my thinking, and the dinner that had cost over eighty francs, and the box at the Folies Bergères which had broken into a second hundred-franc note, did not cause me as many pangs of conscience as the five-franc entrance-fee. Ladies entered the Mabile free, and Alice sometimes paid for Lewis, but very often before she had time to slip five francs into his hand some friends engaged her in conversation, and then he would beseech me to lend him the money, and it angered me to see him fling the coin down with the air of *un grand seigneur*. Half an hour is the longest time that anybody remains in the garden, and as we walked round the estrade in silence, I often thought of my poor Ballintubber tenants.

I wonder how much longer Alice intends to keep me waiting ?

Sometimes she joined us, sometimes she went away with her aristocratic connections, and as we walked home Lewis would rail against her, swearing that he would never see her again, turning a deaf ear to my pleading. Now it amused me to plead for her, and to soothe him I agreed that she should not have left his arm as abruptly as she had done ; but her position was a difficult one, torn between love and necessity. He would answer that he wasn't going to be made a fool of before all Paris, and it delighted me to see him put on the grand air, though if I had been Alice's *amant de cœur* I should like to have been treated frankly as a ponce, one that has to make way for the *miché qui happe le pot*, as in Villon's ballade. To be an *amant de cœur* as Lewis was, *en cachette*, would have filled me with shame, my instinct being

always to be ashamed of nothing but to be ashamed, and it was from the day that Lewis confessed himself ashamed of the rôle he was playing that he lost caste in my eyes. I began to catch myself wondering how it was that he did not scruple about wasting all his life with Alice; he seemed to have abandoned painting altogether, and it was with some unwillingness that I followed them one night to a masked ball dressed in the fantastic costume of Valentine in *Le Petit Faust*. Was it at Perren's I met *la belle Hollandaise*? I think it was at Perren's, the great *cours de danse*, where on week-days young girls from the Faubourg St. Germain learnt their first steps, and on Sunday nights all the *demi-mondaines* assembled—Leonie Leblanc, Cora Pearl, Blanche d'Antigny, Margaret Byron, Hortense Schneider, Julia Baron, and how many others? It was at Perren's that I met her, and not at the commoner *bal* in the Rue Vivienne; she was sitting by Cora Pearl watching me, attracted no doubt at first by the red and yellow tights that I wore, and recognising in her eyes a quiet look of invitation, I summoned up all my courage and crossed the ballroom to inquire if she would dance with me; which she did, passing into my arms with a delightful motion, making me feel her presence without any vulgar thrusting of her body upon me. The music ceased, and she said: You're with friends? Then my heart misgave me, and I answered: Would you like to be introduced? She said she would, and it was plain that Alice was jealous of my new friend; like myself, she believed that it could not be me, but Lewis, that she sought; but as soon as she was assured that this was not so, her attitude toward *la belle Hollandaise* became friendlier, and we four at the close of the *bal* drove to a fashionable restaurant, and afterward to the Rue Duphot, Alice proposing a grand bivouac, for she did not care to sleep in her bed while her guests slept upon the floor. But we would not accept her bed; and my heart again misgave me, thinking that the evening, like many an evening before, would prove platonic . . . for me. As if reading my thought *la belle Hollandaise* asked me

at what moment in the evening I had begun to love her.

When you kissed me.

But I haven't kissed you at all yet, she said. Wait a little while. And leaning her cheek against mine, she whispered strange incomprehensible things in a low, quiet voice that drove me mad, her eyes, curious and enigmatic, fixed on me, her pointed face lifted to mine, her chin enticing, and her soft brown hair brushing my cheek. I can recall the sweet moment when she drew her bracelets from her wrists. But cannot call to mind any part of her undressing, only that she was always beside me, curled serpent-like, a serpent of old Nile, for a woman can coil like one, and during the night I often cried out in terror, awakening Lewis and Alice, who lay asleep in the rich imperial bed. . . . She must have kissed me in the morning and gone to Alice's bathroom and dressed and done her hair, but I remember none of these things, only that we once stood before a large picture by Diaz in her house in the Avenue Victor Hugo. In those days I prefaced my love affairs with a copy of *Mademoiselle de Maupin;* I held one in my hand with a famous passage marked for her to read, and can still hear her telling me that she had been offered three hundred thousand francs to go to Russia. But if you go I shall never see you again. I don't know whether I shall go or not. I don't know what's going to happen to me, were the last words of *la belle Hollandaise,* the last words she addressed to me, and if I relate the incident of our meeting it is because we never forget her who reveals sensuality to us. She is now as old as the fair helm-maker, but on that memorable night Alice and Lewis seemed perfunctory lovers. A few evenings later he offered Alice to me, for they had outlived their love for each other, and were now seeking to maintain it in excess and orgy. Her face wore an odd smile when he proposed her to me, so the thought may have come to her rather than to him, the instinct of every woman being to turn to him who has witnessed her love as soon as she wearies of her lover. So if she had begun to weary of her lover about

this time, we may acquit her of any deep plan to involve me in a quarrel with my cousin when on my coming to invite her out to dinner, she answered that she would dine with me, but she was not yet dressed and I should have to wait in the drawing-room till she had had her bath, unless indeed I did not mind following her into the *cabinet de toilette*—a proposal gladly accepted, for I did not doubt that I should discover in her a more beautiful model than any that had posed in Julian's studio, even if her breasts were too large for a nymph's. On stepping out of her bath she dried herself in many picturesque attitudes whilst we talked of her perfections, the length of her leg from the ankle to the knee, and the spring of her hips. But of love not a word was spoken, for I was not certain that Lewis might not have hidden himself behind a curtain or between the tester and the ceiling unbeknown to her.

She would not believe me at first, he said three months later, after telling me that he had left Alice for good; she would not believe me at first, and all she could find to say to persuade me to remain was: You couldn't leave such a pretty pair of breasts! Soon after, I heard from him that the rupture was confirmed by Alice herself, who had passed him in her carriage in the *Champs Élysées*. She had looked the other way, and there was such scorn in her face that he had vowed he would prove to her that in losing her he had not lost everything. A few days after, he introduced me to a pretty blonde Swede, a woman who was well thought of, but with hardly a tithe of Alice's reputation. I never heard from Lewis why he left her, but one day a carriage drew up by the pavement on which I was walking. The glass was let down, and the Swede told me that she had been obliged to send Lewis away because she found a *voiture de remise indispensable*.

Les voitures de remise et les amants de cœur sont la ruine des femmes, she said; *comme combinaison, c'est aux pommes*. And the wisdom of this second-rate light-o'-love, begotten no doubt of many experiences, called my thoughts back to Alice, who,

since she had thrown out her *amant de cœur*, was rapidly becoming one of the celebrated *demi-mondaines* in Paris. Whilst she went up in the world Lewis sank lower, attaching himself to women who could barely afford him three hundred francs a month, the price of a grisette in the Quartier Latin; the occasional bank-note that his mother used to send him she could afford no longer; his sister was a great expense, and he came to me one day to tell me that he had decided to earn his own living.

Vanderkirko, you know whom I mean, he said, has a small china factory, and he has agreed to take me as an apprentice. I am going to live with him in the Avenue d'Italie *près de la barrière*.

But you'll see nobody. You'll be exiled.

I am weary of the life I have been leading; and you'll come and see me sometimes, though it is a long way off.

I'll come every Sunday, I answered, and a few Sundays later I found him and Vanderkirko building a wall.

So you've come at last! and he took me into the house and showed me some of his first attempts at painting china, and interested me in the manufacture, in *la cuisson au petit et au grand feu*.

Vanderkirko was an ex-Communist, and Lewis told me how a door had opened at the last moment when the Government troops were at his heels. He had rushed through it, and through the house, and he was now married *et très rangé*, and that was why he had refused my invitation to dine and to go to Constant's afterwards. Lewis advised me that the restaurants in the quarter *n'étaient pas trop fameux*, but we could get some simple food *au coin de la rue de la Gaieté*, and afterwards at Constant's he would introduce me to some very dangerous criminals, and he talked to me of the thieves he knew and the robberies they planned and were planning; he talked to me about their mistresses, exciting my imagination, for their nicknames were odd and picturesque. If he be not the lover of a great *demi-mondaine*, he likes to live among

thieves and ponces, I thought; one extreme or the other of society for him. A somewhat unreal person. But, why is one person more unreal than another? I asked myself, deciding that a man without a point of view always conveys the impression of unreality. The long street that we used to walk up together rose in my vision, and Lewis growing more confidential from lamp-post to lamp-post, telling me that it was not idleness, as I supposed, that had kept him out of Julian's studio, nor was it because he had no money to pay the fees—Julian would have let him work for nothing—but he could not accept favours from Julian. The tone of his voice in which he said this surprised me, and then becoming still more confidential, he said that he could not go to Julian's studio because his sister was Julian's mistress. I don't know why I should have been so surprised, but I was surprised that such a thing should have happened and that he should have told me; and, very much concerned, I begged of him to tell me how it had all come about. Apparently in the simplest way. He had introduced her to Julian, and—my memory has dropped a stitch, something and something. He had called at her hotel, and the concierge had told him that Madame had gone away to the country, and the next time they met he asked her where she had been; she answered that she had been to the country with Julian. But you didn't come back that night. Where did you sleep? With Fatty, she had answered coolly. He did not think it right, and he did not think it wrong, that his sister should live as it pleased her; he was always *un peu veule de nature*, without a point of view; and returning from the coal-box, for the fire had sunk very low, I picked up the thread of my thoughts again. He had told me that it was on account of debts he had given up work at the studio, and I remembered that he had confessed to owing Renouf one hundred francs; Julian had lent him fifty, he had had a bit off Chadwick, he had borrowed from Julian's *bonne*, and it was this last debt that had convinced him that sooner or later he would have to earn his own

living. And my heart warmed once more toward this handsome fellow who could take the rough with the smooth, and was as light-hearted in the Avenue d'Italie as in the Rue Duphot, and I praised him to Julian as we drank our coffee at the corner table, until one night, after listening in silence, Julian asked if it had not occurred to me that in losing Lewis Art had suffered a great loss. Lewis's defection from the studio had never struck me in quite so serious a light before, and I asked Julian if he thought that a great genius was being wasted at the Barrière d'Italie. As if he did not hear me, Julian said that casual loans of money were no use, and that it would be better for me not to see Lewis any more unless I could do something definite for him.

Why shouldn't you invite him to live with you for a year, eighteen months?—two years will be sufficient.

But I live in the Hôtel de Russie.

The proper thing for you to do is to take an *appartement* give him a room and let him be certain of his breakfast and his dinner, and pay for his washing. His mother will send him a little pocket-money, and he can work at my studio.

But the studio fees?

Of course I couldn't take your money.

Julian had caught me, and feeling that I lacked courage to say No, and bear the blame of allowing a great genius to wither unknown down by the Barrière d'Italie, I wrote to Lewis telling him of Julian's proposal to me, and next day he came up to thank me and to assure me that he would try to justify the confidence that we placed in him. He did not give me time to consider the wisdom of the sacrifice I was making, and very wisely, but set out at once to find an *appartement* that would suit us, coming next day to me with the joyful tidings that he had seen one in the Passage des Panoramas in the Galerie Feydeau. But I don't think I could live in the Passage des Panoramas, and I begged him to look out for another *appartement*.

But this one is on the first floor, he urged; we shan't have

to go up many stairs, and we shall only have to run round the galleries to Julian's studio. That will save us getting up half an hour earlier in the morning and walking through the wet streets. We shall never see the sky nor feel the wind blowing, and I looked up at the glass roofing through which trickled a dim sordid twilight. The sky and wind are well enough out of doors, he said, but once we are within doors the more we are within the better. I have seen other *appartements*, but nothing as suitable to our convenience. You are going to work, aren't you? And if you are, nothing else matters.

It was with such specious argument that I was inveigled into my prison, and more or less feebly I agreed to forgo light and air for eighteen months or two years.

V

The fire was now burning brightly, and I recalled my memories one by one till the three months we had spent in the studio became visible.

The first week my drawing was no worse than Lewis's; indeed, it was rather better, but the second week he had outstripped me, and whatever talent I had, the long hours in the studio wore it away rapidly, and one day, horrified at the black thing in front of me, I laid down my pencil: saying to myself, I will never take up pencil or brush again, and slunk away out of the studio home to the Galerie Feydeau to the room above the umbrella shop, to my bed, my *armoire à glace*, my half-dozen chairs; and on that bed under its green curtains I lay all night weeping, saying to myself: My life is ended and done. There is no hope for me. All I wanted was Art, and Art has been taken from me. *Je suis fichu, fichu, bien fichu*, I repeated, and the steps of the occasional passer-by echoed mournfully under the glass roofing.

The Galerie Feydeau had never seemed a cheerful place to live in; it was now as hateful to me as a prison, and Lewis

was my gaoler. He went away every morning at eight o'clock, and I met him at breakfast in the little restaurant at the end of the Galerie Feydeau. After breakfast he returned to the studio, and I was free to wander about the streets or to sit in my room reading Shelley. He came home about five, and we went for a walk, and he told me what was happening in the studio. Everything that happened seemed to be for his greater honour and glory. He had won the medal and the hundred francs that Julian offered every month for the best drawing—an innovation this was to attract custom—and a little spree had to be given to commemorate his triumph. He organised the spree very well; of course it was my money that paid for it; and the best part of the studio came to the Galerie Feydeau one evening, and we sang and smoked and drank punch and played the piano. Lewis played the violin, and Julian, drawing his chair up to mine, told me that in ten years hence Lewis would be *hors concours* in the Salon, and living in a great hotel in the Champs Élysées painting pictures at thirty thousand francs apiece. *Les grandes tartines* we used to call the pictures that went to the Salon, or *les grandes machines:* I am forgetting my studio slang. Julian had a difficult part to play. If he were to depreciate Lewis's talent I might throw up the sponge and go away; he thought it safer to assure me that my sacrifices were not made in vain; but man is such a selfish and jealous animal that it had begun to seem to me I would prefer a great failure for Lewis to a great success. Not a great failure, I said to myself; for if he fail I shall never get rid of him. There will be no escape from the Galerie Feydeau for me, so I must hope for his success. He will leave me when he begins to make money. When will that be? and the cruel thought crossed my mind that he was laughing at me all the while, looking upon me as the springboard wherefrom he would jump into a great Salon success. It seemed to me that I could see us both in the years ahead—myself humble and obscure, he great and glorious, looking down upon me somewhat kindly, as the

lion looks upon the mouse that has gnawed the cords that bound him. I think I was as unhappy in the Galerie Feydeau as I had been in Oscott College. I seemed to have lost everybody in the world except the one person I wished to lose, Lewis. I was a stranger in the studio, where I went seldom, for every one there knew of my failure; even the models I feared to invite to my rooms lest they should tell tales afterwards. At last the thought came of my sister's school friend, and at her home I met people who knew nothing of Julian and L'École des Beaux-Arts, and at a public dinner I was introduced to John O'Leary and his Parisian circle, and all these people were interested in me on account of my father. One can always pick one's way into Society, and three months later I was moving in American and English Society about the Place Wagram and the Boulevard Malesherbes, returning home in the early morning, awaking Lewis frequently to describe the party to him, awaking him one morning to tell him that a lady whose boots I was buttoning in the vestibule had leaned over me and whispered that I could go to the very top button . . . if I liked. A very pretty answer it had seemed to Lewis, and it was clear that he was affected by it, though he resisted for a long time my efforts to persuade him to allow me to introduce him to my friends. I had intended only an outing, an exhibition of my cousin, after which he was to return to his kennel. But I had interrupted his life, and fatally; invitations came to him from every side; he accepted them all, and we started to learn the Boston before the *armoire à glace* He learnt it quicker than I did, and when he returned from Barbizon, whither he had gone to meet the wife of an American millionaire, I told him I could live no longer in the Galerie Feydeau and was going away to Boulogne to meet some people whom I had met at Madame Ratazzi's, into whose circle I had happily not introduced him, and wishing to take him down a peg I mentioned that I had acted with her in *La Dame aux Camélias*. He flew into a violent rage. I was going away with swagger friends to enjoy myself, careless whether

he ate or starved. He was right from this point of view. I was breaking my promise to him. But is there anybody who would be able to say he would not have broken his in the same circumstances? None! It was at once a shameful and a natural act; he was my friend; it was shameful, it was horrible, but there are shameful and horrible things in other lives beside mine. His presence had become unendurable. But why excuse myself further? Let the facts speak for themselves and let me be judged by them. They have already been published in *The Confessions of a Young Man*, but I wonder now if I told in that book enough of the surprise that I experienced on finding him still in the *appartement* in the Galerie Feydeau when I returned from Boulogne? He should have moved out of my rooms after the quarrel, but instead of that he had converted the sitting-room into a workshop, and his designs for lace curtains occupied one entire wall. He'll go to-morrow, of course, I said, but he did not go on the morrow or the day after, and at the end of the week he was still there, and annoying me by whistling as he worked on his design. At last, unable to bear it any longer, I opened the door of my bedroom and begged him to cease, and it is to this day a marvel to me how he restrained himself from strangling me. He looked as if he were going to rush at me, and on the threshold of my room indulged in the most fearful vituperation and abuse, to which I felt it would be wiser not to attempt an answer, for his arms were long and his fists were heavy; he was always talking about striking out, and it is foolish to engage in a combat when one knows one is going to get the worst of it, so I just let him shout on until he retired to his lace curtains, and I resolved to give notice.

He can't stay after quarter-day.

But the quarter was a long way off, and every day I met him in the Passage des Panoramas among my friends, flowing away in a new ulster past the jet ornaments and the fans; a splendid fellow he certainly was with his broken nose and his grand eyes, and the ulster suited him so well

that I began to regret a quarrel which prevented me from asking him questions about it. He came and went as he pleased, passing me on the staircase and in the rooms, his splendid indifference compelling the conclusion that however lacking in character a reconciliation would prove me to be, I could no longer forgo one, and after many hesitations I called after him and begged that he would allow bygones to be bygones. I think that he said this was impossible; he must have been counting on my weakness; however this may be, he played with me very prettily, forcing me to plead, practically to ask his forgiveness, and when we were friends again he related that he was looking out for a studio, and in the effusion of reconciliation I very foolishly asked him to tell me if he should happen upon an *appartement* that he thought would suit me, for live another quarter in the Galerie Feydeau I couldn't. He promised that he would not fail to keep his eyes open, and a few days after he mentioned that he had seen a charming *appartement* in the Rue de la Tour des Dames—the very thing that would suit me. As there was not nearly enough furniture in the Galerie Feydeau to fill it, he entered into negotiations with an upholsterer, and dazzled me with a scheme of decoration which would cost very little to carry out, and which would give me as pretty an *appartement* as any in Paris. He was kind enough to relieve me of all the details of *un déménagement*, and what could I do in return but invite him to stay with me until he had painted a picture?

We had a friend at that time who painted little naked women very badly and sold them very well, and it occurred to Lewis that if Faléro could sell his pictures there was no reason why he should not, so he borrowed a hundred francs from me to hire a model, and painted a nymph; but though better drawn than Faléro's nymphs, she went the round, from picture-dealer to picture-dealer, never finding a purchaser, which did not matter much, for Lewis began at this time to please a rich widow who lived in Rue Jean Goujon. She was not, however, very generous, refusing always *de le mettre dans*

ses meubles, and he continued to live with me, wearing my hats and neckties, borrowing small sums of money, and what was still more annoying, beginning to cultivate a taste for literature, daring even to seek literary advice and help from Bernard de Lopez, a Parisian despite his name—Parisian in this much, that he had written a hundred French plays, all in collaboration with the great men of letters of his time, including Dumas, Banville, and Gautier.

I had picked him up in the Hôtel de Russie very soon after my arrival in Paris. He dined there every Monday, an old habit (the origin of this habit he never told me, or I have forgotten)—a strange habit, it seemed, for anything less literary than the Hôtel de Russie . . . for the matter of that anything less literary than Bernard de Lopez's appearance it is impossible to imagine : two piggy little eyes set on either side of a large, well-shaped nose ; two little stunted legs that toddled quickly forward to meet me, and two little warm, fat hands that often held mine too long for comfort. So small a man never had before so large a head, a great bald head with a ring of hair round it, and his chin was difficult to discover under his moustaches ; roll after roll of flesh descended into his bosom, and, by God ! I can still see in my thoughts his little brown eyes watching me just like a pig, suspiciously, though why he should have been suspicious of me I cannot say, unless, indeed, he suspected that I doubted the existence of the plays he said he had written in collaboration, a thing which I frequently did, unjustly, for he was telling the truth. He had collaborated with Gautier, Dumas, and Banville, and having assured myself of this by the *brochures*, I began to think that he could not have been always so trite and commonplace.

Men decline like the day, and he was in the evening of his life when I met him, garrulous about the days gone by, and in the Café Madrid, whither I invited him to come with me after dinner at the Hôtel de Russie, he told me that Scribe had always said he would like to rewrite *La Dame Blanche*.

Rewrite a piece that has been acted a thousand times, Lopez would gurgle, and then he told me about *la scène à faire.* The morning he had brought Dumas the manuscript of *Le Fils de la Nuit* he had said to him : *Nous aurons des larmes.* He used to speak about a writer called Saint-George, whose rooms were always heavily scented, and scent gave the little man *des maux de tête.* There was another man whose name I cannot recall, with whom he had written many plays, and who had an engagement book like a doctor or a dentist, *qui ne l'empêche pas d'avoir beaucoup d'esprit.* It pleases me to recall Lopez's very words : they bring back the 'seventies to me, and my own thoughts of the 'seventies and the intellectual atmosphere in which these men lived, going about their business with comedies and plays in their heads—an appointment at ten to consider the first act of a vaudeville ; after breakfast another appointment, perhaps at the other end of Paris, to discover a plot for a drama ; a talk about an opera in the café at five, and perhaps somebody would call in the evening—no—not in the evening, for they wrote on into the night, tumbling into bed at three or four in the morning.

Of the wonderful 'seventies Lopez was *le dernier rejeton ;* and talking about *Le Fils de la Nuit,* the first play that had ever run two hundred nights, we strolled back to his lodging in the Place Pigalle—a large room on the second floor overlooking the Place with a *cabinet de toilette.* And as time went on I learnt some facts about him. He had been married, and received from his wife the few thousand francs a year on which he lived, and the Empire bed with chairs and a toilet-table to match must have come from her ; he would not have thought of buying them, and still less the two portraits by Angelica Kauffmann on either side of the fireplace. A man who had outlived his day ! a superficial phrase, for none can say when a man has outlived his day. He had not outlived his when the managers ceased to produce his plays, for he drew my attention to literature, and it is pleasant to me to remember the day that I hurried down to Galignani's to buy

a play, for one evening while we talked in the Café Madrid it had occurred to me that with a little arrangement Lewis and Alice would supply me with the subject of a comedy. But never having read a play I did not know how one looked upon paper. Congreve, Wycherley, Farquhar, and Vanbrugh (Leigh Hunt's edition) were my first dramatic authors, and my first comedy, in imitation of these writers, was composed and written and copied out and read to Bernard de Lopez within six weeks of its inception. His criticism of it was, I thought at first we were going to have a very strong play, a man that marries his mistress to his friend, and I understood at once that the subject had been frittered away in endless dialogue after the manner of my exemplars, and it was as likely as not in the hope of getting all this dialogue acted that I returned to England, remaining there some time, writing a long comedy which Lopez did not like. Drama was abandoned for poetry, and Lopez encouraged me to tell him of my poems, advising me as we ascended the Rue Notre Dame de Lorette or the Rue des Martyrs to choose subjects that would astonish the British public by their originality—for instance, if instead of inditing a sonnet to my mistress's eyebrows I were to tell the passion of a toad for a rose.

Not that, of course not that, but poems on violent subjects.

A young man's love for a beautiful corpse, I interjected.

He introduced French poetry to me, and through him I read a great deal that I might not have heard of, and wrote a great deal that I might never have written; and it was to him that I brought my first copy of my first book, *Flowers of Passion*, together with an article that had appeared in *The World*, entitled, A Bestial Bard. The article began: The author of these poems should be whipped at the cart's tail, while the book is being burnt in the market-place by the common hangman. It filled the greater part of a column, and the note struck by Edmund Yates was taken up by other critics, and, much impressed by the violence of their language, Lopez said: They seem to have exhausted the vocabulary of

abuse upon you, and he began to sound me regarding the possibility of an English and a French author writing a play together for the English stage. Martin Luther seemed to us a character that would suit Irving, then at the height of his fame.

But shall we present both sides of the question impartially like Goethe? Or shall we write as ardent Protestants?

As ardent Protestants, I answered. Lopez acquiesced, and one day when I called to discuss a certain scene between Catherine Bora and Luther with my collaborator, I came upon Lewis reading a sonnet to him. Always thrusting himself into my life! are words that will let the reader into the secret of my annoyance. He rose abashed, and the sight of Lewis abashed was a novel one. Lopez continued to explain:

Mon cher monsieur, ce n'est pas pour vous contrarier, mais 'd'où suintent d'étranges pleurs' est un vers de sept; suintent n'a que deux syllabes.

C'est ma mauvaise prononciation flamande, Lewis said, and he bundled up his papers, adding: You have come to talk Martin Luther, so I'll leave you.

By what right does he come interrupting you?

He only came to show me a sonnet.

But what the devil does he want to write sonnets for? Isn't it enough that he should paint bad pictures?

He merely came to inquire out the prosody of a certain line, Lopez answered, and he tried to calm me.

No, there's no use, Lopez. I can't fix my thoughts. Perhaps after dinner. What do you say to the Rat Mort?

He raised no objection to the Rat Mort, but the moment we entered the café he rushed up to a dishevelled and wild-eyed fellow. I thought I had lost him. Let me introduce you, he said, to Villiers de l'Isle Adam. Lewis was forgotten in the excitement of dining with a real man of letters, in the pleasure of confiding to Villiers the scene that I had come to talk to Lopez about.

It is to Martin Luther himself, I said, whom she has

never seen, that she confesses in a wood her love of Martin Luther.

I must introduce you to Mallarmé, said Villiers, and he wrote a note on the edge of the table. You'll find him at home on Tuesday evenings.

Mallarmé spoke to me of Manet, and he must have spoken to Manet about me, for one night in the Nouvelle Athènes Manet asked me if the conversation distracted my attention from my proofs. Come and see me in my studio in the Rue d'Amsterdam. And not very many evenings later Mendès was introduced to me between one and two in the morning. He asked me to the Rue Mansard, where he lived with Mademoiselle Holmès, whereupon, before I had time to realise the fact, I was launched on Parisian literary and artistic society, and six months afterwards Manet said to me, There is no Frenchman in England who occupies the position you do in Paris. Perhaps there isn't, I answered mechanically, my thoughts turning to Lewis, who was certainly going down in the world. I should have done better to have left him in the Mont Rouge to get his living as a workman, for he'll never be able to scrape together any sort of living as a painter, and my spirits rose mountains high against him. An old man from the sea, I said, whom I cannot shake off.

But the courage to fling him into the street was lacking, and I continued to bear with him day after day, hoping that he would leave me of his own accord. He was well enough in Julian's studio or in the Beaux-Arts or in English and American society, but he would seem shallow and superficial in the Nouvelle Athènes, and I always avoided taking him there; but one night he asked me to tell him where I was dining, and I had to tell him at the Nouvelle Athènes. He pleaded to be allowed to accompany me, and I will admit to some vanity on my part; or was it curiosity that prompted me to introduce him to Degas, who very graciously invited us to sit at his table and talked to us of his art, addressing himself as often to Lewis as he did to me. He opened his whole mind to

us, beguiled by Lewis's excellent listening, until the waiter brought him a dish of almonds and raisins. Then a lull came, and Lewis said, leaning across the table:

I think, Monsieur Degas, you will agree with me that, more than any other artist among us, Jules Lefebre sums up all the qualities that an artist should possess.

My heart misgave me, and Degas's laughter did not console me, nor his words whispered in my ear as he left:

Votre ami est très fort. . . . Il m'a fait monter l'échelle comme personne. And a few days afterwards in the Rue Pigalle he said:

Comment va votre ami? Ah! celui-là est d'une force.

Mais, cher ami, le pauvre garçon n'a jamais su se dégager——

Pas du tout; il est très fort.

Son esprit n'a jamais su dépasser certaines bornes . . . la Rue Bonaparte.

But no explanation pleased Degas as much as his own: *Il m'a tiré les vers du nez . . . et comme personne* I resisted this explanation till, feeling that I was beginning to show myself in a stupid light, I accepted it outwardly, though convinced inly that Lewis had been guilty of the unpardonable sin—lack of comprehension. He must go and at once, and as soon as I returned home I begged him to leave me. At the end of the month, when my mother sends me my money, he answered, and my heart sank at the thought of having him with me so long. I think I must have answered, For God's sake go! and a few days afterwards the concierge mentioned to my great surprise that Monsieur Hawkins had left, and had paid her the few francs he owed her. A good trait on his part, I thought, and my heart softened toward him suddenly, and continued soft until a lady told me that Monsieur Hawkins had been to see her and had borrowed a hundred francs from her.

I didn't dare refuse, she said, but I thought it rather mean of him to come to ask me for the money.

We sat looking at each other, the lady thinking no doubt

that I should not have told Lewis I was her lover, and myself thinking that I had at length caught Lewis in deliberate blackmail; and, going round to the studio in which he had settled himself, I said, before looking round the walls to admire the sketches:

I have just come from Miss ——, and she tells me you borrowed a hundred francs from her.

If I did, you borrowed from Alice Howard, my mistress, he answered.

I had forgotten, and sat dumbfounded. But why had I borrowed this money? I never wanted for money. Perhaps to put Alice to the test, or to get back some of my own, for she had borrowed often from me, and finding her in affluent circumstances. . . . She asked me some days after to repay her, and I gave her the money that was in my pockets—a hundred francs; the other hundred I forgot all about till one evening at Alphonsine's I saw her rise up from her place and walk toward me, a vindictive look round her mouth and eyes.

Have you come, she said, to pay me the money that you owe me?

To admit that I had borrowed money from Alice at Alphonsine's was impossible; lies happen very seldom in my life, but they have happened, and this was an occasion when a lie was necessary. But I lied badly from lack of habit, and Lewis had heard from the women there that I had not stood up to Alice; and now to pass off the matter on which I had come to speak to him, I asked him how I should have answered Alice.

You should have answered her ironically: *Toi, tu m'as prêté de l'argent? Où ça? Quand tu venais me trouver à l'hôtel de toutes les Russes et que tu pleurais pour un déjeuner? Quand tu n'avais pas deux mètres d'indienne à te coller sur les fesses? Non, mais vrai: y avait-il une maquerelle rue de Provence qui voulait de ta peau? Tu dis que tu m'as prêté de l'argent? C'est-il quand ton tôlier te reprenait ta clé tous les*

matins, ou quand tu demandais aux michés cinquante centimes pour aller aux chiottes ?

Splendid ! I cried.

Faut pas se laisser marcher sur le pied, dis. Je ne lui aurais pas parlé autrement.

You have *l'esprit prime-sautier*, but any wit I have is *l'esprit de l'escalier . . . et de la dernière marche.*

Je ne lui aurais pas parlé autrement.

Patter always excites my admiration ; we get back to origins—to the monkey. And looking round the studio the number of sketches that I saw everywhere in oil and water-colour put the thought into my mind that Lewis must have discovered a patron and was living as comfortably as he had ever done with me. So all my sacrifices were in vain, I said to myself, and aloud to him : You are doing a great deal of work. I have discovered a patron, he answered, and he told me of an old man living in a barred house in a distant suburb who never opened his door except to a certain ring—an old man in gold-rimmed spectacles who would buy any drawing that Lewis brought him at a price : thirty francs for a flower in a vase, for an apple, a pear, for a street corner, for a head sketched in ten minutes. He is your banker ? I said. Yes ; it's just like cashing a cheque. And I left the studio hoping that the old man who looked at Lewis's drawings through gold-rimmed spectacles would live for many a year. His death would certainly bring back Lewis to me asking for fifty, for a hundred francs ; and if I could not lend him so much he would ask for twenty, and if I could not manage twenty he would ask for ten, and if I could not manage ten he would ask for five, perhaps coming down to the price of his omnibus home. But the old man continued in the flesh, and weeks and months passed away without my seeing or hearing from Lewis. Years must have gone by before we met at Barbizon, whither he had gone intent upon investing all his savings on a Salon picture.

An old graveyard full of the lush of June had taken his

fancy, and after many sketches he was still certain that he had hit on a good subject for a picture. A critic pointed out that two children looking at a gravestone would balance the composition; another said that a yellow cat coming from the cottages along the wall would complete it. Both were right; all that now remained for Lewis to do was to paint the picture. But he lacked touch, and his picture would have remained very tinny if Stott of Oldham had not arrived at Barbizon suddenly.

You mustn't rub the paint like that. See here; and taking the brush from Lewis's hand he mixed a tone and drew the brush slowly from right to left. Almost at once the paint began to look less like tin, and Lewis said, I think I understand, and he was able to imitate Stott sufficiently well to produce a picture which Bouguereau said would attract attention in the Salon if the title were changed to *Les Deux Orphelins*.

L'Amour renaît de ses Cendres is not a title that will appeal to the general public.

Lewis tried to explain that what he meant was that the love of the parents is born again in their children; but he allowed Bouguereau's good sense to prevail, and the picture drew from Albert Wolf an enthusiastic notice of nearly half a column in the *Figaro*, after which it became the fashion to go to the Salon to see *Les Deux Orphelins* and Monsieur Hawkins, *un jeune peintre anglais de beaucoup de talent*, for Lewis could not separate himself from his picture, and every day he grew bolder, receiving his friends in front of it and explaining to them, and to all and sundry, the second title, *L'Amour renaît de ses Cendres*. His conduct was not very dignified, but he had been waiting so long for recognition of his talent that he could not restrain himself. He sold *Les Orphelins* for ten thousand francs, and next year the Salon was filled with imitations of it, and there was a moment when it seemed that Julian's prophecy was about to come true. The hotel in the Champs Élysées was being sought for when

Lewis's first patron, the old man to whom he had sold his sketches for twenty-five or thirty francs apiece, died suddenly; and for nearly two years Welden Hawkinses were being knocked down at the Hôtel de Vente for fifty and a hundred francs apiece.

Fifteen hundred or two thousand pictures thrown upon the market was no doubt a misfortune, I said as I stirred the fire, but if Lewis had been a man of healthy talent he would have painted other pictures. But his talent was the talent of *un détraqué*, and a recollection of a naked man looking at a naked woman through a mask was remembered. The hereditary taint was always there, I said, and I began to turn over in my mind all that Lewis had told me about his father. My father left mamma some three or four years after their marriage. I think I was twenty before I ever saw him. I was given an address of a lodging-house in St. James's, and found my father in a small back room, sitting on a bed playing the flute. *Oh, is that you, Lewis? Just a moment.* Lewis had heard from his mother many stories of his father's eccentricities, and he had an opportunity of verifying these in St. James's Street, for when the elder Hawkins laid aside his flute and engaged in perfunctory conversation with his son he allowed a fly to crawl over his face. Every moment Lewis expected his father to brush the insect away. It had been round one eye several times, and had descended the nose, and was about to go up the eye once again when Lewis, who could contain himself no longer, cried out:

Father, that fly!

Pray don't disturb it, I like the sensation.

My thoughts passed from Lewis to Jim, and I sat for a long time asking myself if Jim would have succeeded better than Lewis if he had gone to Paris in the 'fifties. He had more talent than Lewis, but his talent seemed still less capable of cultivation. There is a lot of talent in Ireland, but whether any of it is capable of cultivation is a question one can ponder for days, and my thoughts breaking away suddenly I

remembered how, soon after my return from Ireland when I had settled in Cecil Street in the Strand, and was trying to make my living by writing for the papers, the desire to see Jim again in the old studio in Prince's Gardens had come upon me, and I had gone away one night in a cab to Kensington; but the appearance of the footman who opened the door surprised me, and I asked myself if Jim had sold some pictures, or had let the house. He had sold the house, and any letters that came for him were sent to Arthur's Club, where I could obtain news of him. The porter told me that any letter would be forwarded, but I wanted to see Jim that very night, and addressing myself to the secretary of the club, who happened to be passing through the hall at that moment, I begged of him to authorise the porter to give me Mr. Browne's address, which he did: and I went away in a cab certain that the end of the drive would bring me face to face with my old boon companion. The cab turned out of Baker Street and we were soon in Park Road driving between Regent's Park and a high wall with doors let into it. Before one of these the hansom stopped and I saw a two-storeyed house standing in the midst of a square plot. A maid-servant took me up a paved pathway, mentioning that Mr. Browne was on the drawing-room floor, and I found him waiting expectant in his smock, a palette and a sheaf of brushes in his left hand, the thumb of his right hand in his leather belt.

My dear Jim, I've been to Prince's Gardens.

We've sold the house and Pinkie and Ada have gone to live with friends and relations.

There was a feeling in the room that nobody had called to see him for many a month, and I noticed that a good deal of colour had died out of the thick locks of flaxen hair and that his throat was wrinkled.

And all your pictures, Jim?

Your mother was kind enough to hang them up in Alfred Place when we left Prince's Gardens, and when she left the house at the end of her lease the pictures were taken away

And you didn't make any inquiries?

Well, you see, I haven't room here for many canvases.

The moment had come when I must show some interest in his pictures, and turning from the one on the easel I picked one out of the rows, hoping that the design might inspire a few words of praise.

You must have painted a dozen or twenty times upon it. I don't know how you can work over such a surface, a thick coagulated scum. Why don't you scrape? Manet always scrapes before painting, and he never loses the freshness; his paint is like cream after twenty repaintings.

Jim did not know anything about Manet, nor did he care to hear about Monet, Sisley, Renoir, the Nouvelle Athènes and its litterati. He knew nothing of Banville's versification and had not read Goncourt's novels, so I told him that Catulle had thought well of my French sonnet, for having written a drama on the subject of Luther it was necessary to write a French dedicatory sonnet, and I recited it to Jim to revenge myself upon him for his having told me that he knew French as well as English.

My landlady's daughter, he said, pointing to a small portrait on the wall, and some time afterwards a young girl was heard singing on the stairs. There she is. Shall I ask her in?

I begged of him to do so, and a somewhat pretty girl with round eyes and a vivacious voice, came into the room and chattered with us; but her interest in the fact that Jim was my cousin was a little high-pitched, and it was obvious that she took no interest in his pictures, or indeed in any pictures; and it was a relief when she turned to Jim to ask him if he was staying to dinner.

Let us go out together and dine somewhere, I said.

Yes, ask him out to dinner. It will do him good. He hasn't been beyond the garden for weeks.

Yes, Jim; we will go up town and dine together.

I have no money.

But father will lend you any money you want. It will

go down in the . . . you can settle with father when you like.

She left the room and Jim spoke of the people in whose house he was lodging, a dancing master and his wife, and he gave me a mildly sarcastic account of Mrs. —— coming up to see him in the morning to tell him that he might have the use of the parlour for ten shillings extra ; my ears retain his voice still saying something about coals and gas not being included, and what tickled his fancy was the way the old lady used to linger about the drawing-room trying to draw the conversation on to his sisters, where was Miss Ada living now, and was Miss Pinkie still living with Lady Shaftesbury ? He continued talking, moving the canvases about, and I was willing to appreciate the designs if he would only say that he would come out to dinner. At last he said :

You see, I haven't been to my tailor's for a long time, and my wardrobe is in a ragged and stained condition. I dare say they'll be able to find some cold beef or cold mutton or a sausage or two in the larder. You don't mind ?

Of course I did not mind. It was for a talk about old times that I had come, and after the cold meats we returned to the drawing-room. Jim showed me all his latest designs and we discussed them together, mingling our memories of the women we had known. The names of Alice Harford, Annie Temple, and Mademoiselle d'Anka came into the conversation ; I told him about Alice Howard, hoping he would ask me if she were as big as Alice Harford, and then, determined to rouse him, I said the great love affair of my life was a small, thin woman. Still he did not answer.

If a woman be sensual——

Beauty is better than bumping, he answered with a laugh, and it seemed that we were to have one of our erstwhile conversations about Art and that Jim would draw forth a canvas and say, This has all the beauties of Raphael and other beauties besides ; but he seemed to have lost nearly all his interest in painting, allowing me, however, to search round the

room and discover behind the sofa a new version of *Cain Shielding his Wife from Wild Beasts*, and I spoke of the design and the conception and the movement of the man about to hurl a spear at a great lion approaching from behind a rock. He took up his palette but forgot to roar like a lion, and when he laid it aside he did not sing *Il balen* or *A che la morte*, nor did he tell me that Pinkie had a more beautiful voice than Jenny Lind, and when we walked across the garden and he bade me good-bye at the gate, I felt that he had worn out himself as well as his clothes—his hopes, his talent, his enthusiasm for life, all were gone, an echo remained, an echo which I did not try to reawaken. I never saw him again ; he was for me but an occasional thought, until one day I found myself sitting next a showily dressed woman at luncheon, the daughter of Jim's landlady, and it was from her I learnt that Jim had died about two years back in Park Road. She said he had become quite a hermit in the later years of his life, never leaving the house except for a stroll round the garden.

Painting always, I said.

A perplexed look came into her face which I attributed to the fact that she did not know whether the pictures were works of art or nothing at all, and I asked myself suddenly what Jim's death might have been, for a man so individual as Jim should die an individual death. But my imagination did not succeed in conjuring up any worthy death for him. Perhaps Turgenev might have failed too, though indeed Jim's death is very like a Turgenev death, only a little more wonderful. Nature often invents better than we, better even than Turgenev, who would have seen that Jim must be killed by a lion ; but even Turgenev could not have seen how this could be managed without sending him out to Africa to hunt lions, which would be an invention only one degree more stupid than the supposition that the keeper had left one of the lion's cages open in the Zoological Gardens, and that the animal had escaped and climbed over the wall of Park Road, killing Jim, after tearing a hole through a large canvas of *Cain*

Shielding his Wife from Wild Beasts, behind which the painter had hidden himself. Turgenev would not have thought of a snow lion, but Nature did, and one day when the snow was lying several feet deep round the house, she inspired Jim to make good his theory that a lion always lies with one paw tucked under him, never with the fore-paws stretched out like Landseer's lions in Trafalgar Square. He had always been saying that this was so, but his landlord and landlady did not wish him to start sculpture in the house. But now there was snow at the very door, and he began to pile it up, and when all the snow in the garden was exhausted the neighbours sent their snow in wheelbarrows and he continued to pile up hundredweight upon hundredweight until his lion assumed almost Egyptian proportions, rising above the surrounding walls, attracting the eyes of the hansom-cabmen who drew up their horses to admire and to suggest that the lion should be sent to the British Museum. Perhaps the Governor might have a refrigerator built for him, was a remark, which caused some amusement to the dancing master, his wife and daughter, and to Jim. But it was not thought worth while writing to the Governor of the Museum on the subject. The suggestion, Why don't you 'ave him photographed? coming next day from the top of an omnibus seemed more practical, and the maid-servant was asked to run round to the photographer, and the evening was spent counting the number of copies that would be required; each neighbour who had sent his snow must get one, and before bedtime it was noticed that the brightness of the stars predicted a fine day. But during the night clouds gathered, and in the morning the garden was enveloped in a white mist. A messenger came from the photographer to say he could do nothing that day, and the following day he failed to keep his appointment, and in a drizzle of rain Jim set to work to patch up his melting masterpiece. The next day the photographer arrived and got what he hoped would prove a very good impression; but everybody wanted a half-plate; and Jim worked on among the wet snow,

Florence begging of him to put on an overcoat and a stronger pair of boots. But he tramped about in shoes, and next day he was crouching over the fire, and when the doctor heard the story of the lion he threw up his hands.

How a man of his age could be foolish enough to risk his life for such nonsense! And you tell me he always goes out without an overcoat? I'll call to-morrow and give him oxygen if required.

The thaw continued during the night, and Jim and his lion dissolved together. My first friend, I muttered, the spring-board from whence I jumped into life and Art. And going to my Monet, I asked myself if Jim would have been able to discern better than Æ the beauty of the evanescent willows rising out of and vanishing into the mist. He was a clever man, and knew a great deal more than anybody gave him credit for knowing. He talked nonsense about his own genius, but he knew he was talking nonsense, and his nonsense helped him to disguise his failure from himself for a moment. He should have been born in Venice about the year 1680; his talent would have come to fruition in those years, and Van Dyck would have painted his portrait. Just then the servant opened the door to ask me if I were at home to Mr. Hugh Lane.

Yes.

And a moment after there came into the room a tall, thin young man, talking so fast that I gathered with difficulty that there must be a great many pictures in Irish country houses which he would like to exhibit in Dublin.

If anybody cares for pictures, I contrived to interject, and he sat twisting and untwisting his legs, linking and unlinking his hands, his talk beginning to bore me a little, for I could not detect any aestheticism in him, only a nervous desire to run a show. Your brother, I said, called here a few days ago to prepare me for your visit. He said that you were going to revive Irish painting. I came here to revive the Irish language; it existed once upon a time, but Irish painting——

Lane interrupted me, admitting that the men who had painted in Ireland at the end of the eighteenth century were merely reflections of Sir Joshua and Romney.

But your brother——

Without noticing my interruption he continued telling me that, for the last fortnight, he had been travelling through Ireland, visiting all the country houses, and had obtained promises from many people to lend their pictures.

Now, your name among the list of patrons at the exhibition——

But why are you giving yourself all this trouble? What is your object?

Well, you see, I am Lady Gregory's nephew, and must be doing something for Ireland.

Striking a blow, I said.

A bewildered look, quickly repressed, however, revealed to me that he did not understand my remark. You don't speak with a brogue. Your brother said you didn't. How is that?

He produced his little hysterical laugh, and without stopping to explain why it was that he had no brogue, looked round the room in search of pictures worth borrowing, and having decided upon two, a portrait of Rachel by Couture and a small Constable, he said he hoped I would try to influence Sir Thornley Stoker in his favour; he would like to print Sir Thornley's name among the patrons of the forthcoming exhibition, an exhibition designed for the advancement of Art In Ireland. I gave Lane my promise that he should be invited to the palace, our nickname for Sir Thornley's house, so full was it of beautiful things. But Sir Thornley could not be persuaded, and my affection for him was strained to the uttermost by his persistent speaking of Lane as a London picture-dealer who had come to Ireland to see what he could pick up.

Or perhaps he's on the look-out for a post in the Museum.

I have told you, Sir Thornley, that he is Lady Gregory's nephew, and would like to do something for Ireland. That

should be sufficient. He growled and muttered that Lane might tell us he was a great expert, but what proof had we of it? And the old doctor grew as grumpy as if I had been speaking of a bone-setter. My dear Thornley, we do not learn anything that we did not know before; and I sketched out the life-history of a chef who before discovering his vocation had wandered from one trade to another, trying all, until one night in the kitchen two ducks were roasting before the fire, the gravy running out of their backsides, and deeply moved, he had stood immersed in a great joy.

But what has that got to do with Lane?

Lane is Lady Gregory's nephew.

You have told me that before; you have said that before.

Of course, if you interrupt me. I was going to tell you that Lady Gregory told me herself that the family had thought of all kinds of professions suitable for Hugh, but his heart was not in any of them, and they were beginning to feel a little anxious, when one day, as they were sitting down to lunch——

Was there a duck for luncheon?

No. He caught sight of the fold of Lady Gregory's dress, a tailor-made from Paris; it is always a pleasure to a woman to hear her gown admired; but there was a seriousness in Hugh's appreciation of the hang of the skirt, and a studied regard in his eyes which caused her a moment's perplexity, and when they rose from table he stood watching her as she crossed the room. Of course, the skirt fitted rather nicely, but . . . In the same afternoon she had occasion to go to her bedroom, and to her surprise found her wardrobe open and Hugh trying on her skirts before the glass. Hugh! Doesn't it seem to you, Aunt Augusta, that this skirt is a little too full? During the evening he spoke of some premises in Conduit Street; but tailoring was only a passing thought, and the next thing they heard of Hugh was that he had gone into Colnaghi's shop to learn the business of picture-dealing.

Nature is always unexpected, Thornley, bounding about like a monkey, and it may be that Lane sprang from tailor-

mades right into Salvator Rosa, and up again to Giorgione and Titian. But if I had to choose Lane as the hero of a novel or play, I should proceed more regularly, a transition would be necessary, a little shop in St. James's, down some court long ago swept away by an enterprising builder. In my novel there certainly would be a little shop with a window full of old fans and bits of silver, just the kind of shop that you would hang about every afternoon when you came back from the hospital, and I should place Lane in a little den out of which he would come to show you some paste—old paste. I have it, Thornley ; cameos and old paste would be the steps whereby Lane mounted from tailor-mades to Salvator Rosa and then on to—whom did I say, Thornley ?

Giorgione, the old doctor muttered, laughing in his beard. Two years is long enough. I was five years walking the hospitals.

It was long enough for Lane. When he left Colnaghi's shop and took a lodging in Bury Street, he was able to buy and sell pictures so successfully that in two years he had put together, I think he told me, ten thousand pounds.

Yet you say he is not a dealer ; and the old doctor continued to growl by the fireside.

He is a collector who weeds out his collection. Let us call him a weeder ; and let us never speak of the lavatory but of the cloak-room or the toilet-room. And let us avoid the word lodger, for he is extinct, or, like the phoenix, he has risen from his ashes and become a paying-guest. Petticoat-bodice is taboo ; and bodice—even bodice—one of the beautifullest words in the language, has yielded to the detestable corsage ; and the journalist speaks of a woman as *petite*, thinking that *petite* suggests refinement. Naked is a word that nobody of taste would think of using—unclothed or undraped ; no reasonable man or woman would object to meeting this sentence in a novel : I would give all my worldly wealth to see Venus walk undraped from her bath ; the novelist might even write : I would give all my worldly wealth to see Elizabeth Hawkins walk undraped from her bath ; but if he were to

write: I would give all my worldly wealth to see Elizabeth Hawkins walk naked from her bath, he would be dubbed a very gross writer by the newspapers, though it is difficult to say how morality gains by the substitution of unclothed or undraped for naked, and easy to see that literature dies in these substitutions. Who would ever think of asking a lady for the bill-of-fare? Even in the second-class restaurants the word bill-of-fare has been dropped, we read now the menu. So you see, Lane is quite in the fashion when he calls himself a collector If you would only meet him you would be converted, not to euphuisms, but to Lane. He has got such pretty ways. When you ask him if he is going to sell a picture he will say: Don't talk to me about selling; I can't bear to part with my pictures. One of these days I shall have a house and shall want pictures; and immediately the conversation will slide away, and you'll find yourself listening to a long tale of a collection of pictures which he intends to present at cost price to some provincial gallery. He is all for Art, and you, who have been talking Art and buying beautiful things all your life, now repudiate the one man who comes to Ireland to revive the art of painting.

It never existed in Ireland.

Never mind. It will be revived all the same.

He's a dealer. He has made, according to you, ten thousand pounds in two years, and a dealer never will miss the chance of picking up something, and you'll find that he will pick up something.

There's no use talking any more. I've spent a very pleasant evening. Good night, Thornley, good night.

Well, you'll see, were his last words, and he was very sarcastic when it became known that Lane had bought a large Lancret from Sir Algernon Coote at the close of the exhibition, and whenever I went in to smoke a cigar with him he referred to this deal with extraordinary bitterness. I could not see what ground of complaint he had against Lane. Sir Algernon Coote, I often said, was glad to get seven or eight hundred,

perhaps a thousand for his picture. What concern is it of yours the price the picture fetches afterwards? He growled in his armchair, averring that Lane had no right to ask Sir Algernon Coote to lend him a picture and then to buy it from him. A most extraordinary proposition, I said. If nobody is to make a profit, there can be no buying or selling. Yourself made a profit upon your sale of Wedgwood.

Sir Thornley did not think that this was quite the same thing, and I said, Pooh, pooh.

We had just begun to forget Lane when we heard that he had run across a Tiepolo at Ostend, and had picked up another picture in Antwerp, and for these pictures and Sir Algernon Coote's Lancret he had been paid seventeen thousand pounds by Durand Ruel. He had not taken it all out in cash; Lane's genius lies in swopping. It is a bold man that dares to swop with Durand Ruel, but Lane dares everything, and he got Manet's portrait of Mademoiselle Gonzales probably cheaper than a private buyer could have gotten it, on the plea that it was going into a permanent exhibition. It came over with a number of Impressionist pictures, lent by different people—Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley, Berthe Morisot—all the Impressionist school.

And for what object? Sir Thornley cried.

To found a Gallery of Modern Art. Again I set myself to explain Lane to Sir Thornley, without arriving at any results whatever. He would not, or he could not, understand that though it is Lane's instinct to make money it is also his instinct to spend the money that he makes upon Art. Nobody that I have ever met, Thornley, desires Art as purely as Lane. I have known many people who make money out of Art, but it is generally spent on motor-cars, women, cooks, and valets. But Lane spends hardly anything upon himself. His whole life is absorbed in Art, and he would not be able to gratify his passion if he did not make money. Why will you not be reconciled to him? Why will you not accept him for what he is? I said again and

again. But he remained grumpy, doggedly refusing to become a member of the committee, consenting, however, to visit the exhibition, not being able to resist my descriptions of the portrait of Mademoiselle Gonzales, the *Itinerant Musician*, and the other pictures.

A wonderful exhibition it was, organised by Lane, who rushed about Dublin from one end to the other, begging of everybody to come to his exhibition, gathering up the ladies into groups, giving them all something to do, telling one that she must collect subscriptions to buy a certain picture, another one that she must play the piano for him; another would oblige him by playing, or trying to play, it did not matter which, a violin solo, the *Kreutzer Sonata*, or anything else she liked. He discovered a young gentleman who sang comic songs very well; for the sake of Art he was asked to sing. Anybody who could write at all was asked to write letters to the papers. Everybody in Dublin was swept into the exhibition, and as soon as the receipts began to decline Lane was again devising some new method whereby they might be revived. So far I had resisted him, and he came one evening to ask me to write an article.

No, ten thousand times no.

Lane laughed, and suggested a lecture.

I am the only one in Dublin who knew Manet, Monet, Sisley, Renoir, Pissarro—I knew them all at the Nouvelle Athènes. Lane, you tempt me.

When will you be able to give the lecture?

A terror came upon me, and I stuttered, When? One has to speak for an hour, an hour and ten minutes, an hour and fifteen minutes. That would make two fortnightly articles at the very least. *Oh, Lane!*

I'll begin to advertise the lecture to-morrow. You'll have four days to prepare it.

Four days!

And Lane, who is always in a hurry, bade me good night abruptly.

VI

It is to Mr. Lane's extraordinary enthusiasm, energy, and love of Art that we owe the pleasure of this beautiful collection of pictures, and, that it may not be but a passing pleasure, it is his proposal to collect funds for the purchase of these pictures, and to found a Gallery of Modern Art in Dublin. A few days before the Exhibition opened he came to ask for an article about these pictures but it seemed to me that all I had to say about pictures in the form of articles I had already said; and I did not dare to accept his proposal to deliver a lecture on French Art until it occurred to me that being probably the only person in Dublin who had known the painters whose works hang on the wall, I might, without being thought too presumptuous, come here—I will not say to discuss French Art—I prefer to say to talk about Manet, Degas, Renoir, Pissarro, Monet, and Sisley, and in doing so to discuss French Art indirectly. But before beginning to talk of these great men I must tell how I came to know them, else you will be at a loss to understand why they consented to know me.

When my mother offered me my choice of Oxford or Cambridge, I told her that I had decided to go to Paris. My dear boy, your education—you learned nothing at school. That is why, my dear mother, I intend to devote myself entirely to my own education, and I think it can be better conducted by myself than by a professor. You are taking William with you? my mother asked. I answered that I had arranged that he should accompany me. My mother was soothed, for a valet means conformity to certain conventions. But the young man who sets out on artistic adventure must try to separate himself from all conventions, whether of politics, society, or creed, and my valet did not remain with me for more than six or eight months; for, like Lord Byron's, his continual sighing after beef, beer, and a wife, his incapacity for learning a single word of a foreign language—the beds he

couldn't sleep on, and the wines he couldn't drink—I forget how the sentence closes in the letter (addressed, perhaps, to Mr. Murray)—obliged me to send William Malowney back to England. But too much love of living was not the sole cause of William's dismissal. I had begun to feel that he stood between me and myself; I wished above all things to be myself, and to be myself I should have to live the outer as well as the inner life of the Quarter. Myself was the goal I was making for, and to reach it I felt that I must put off the appearance of a gentleman, a change that my William resented; and being unwilling to reduce him to the servitude of brushing French trousers and hats, I gave him the sack. He died in Brompton Consumption Hospital.

In the Middle Ages young men went in search of the Grail; to-day the café is the quest of a young man in search of artistic education. But the cafés about the Odéon and the Luxembourg Gardens did not correspond to my need, I wearied of noisy students, the Latin Quarter seemed to me a little out of fashion; eventually I migrated to Montmartre, and continued my search along the Boulevard Extérieur. One evening I discovered my café on the Place Pigalle, La Nouvelle Athènes! Who named it the Nouvelle Athènes I cannot say; some ancient *cafetier* who foresaw the future glory of his house; for it was La Nouvelle Athènes before the Impressionists, the Parnassians, and the Realists came to spend their evenings on the Place Pigalle. Or was it the burly proprietor, associated always in my mind with a certain excellent *râble de lièvre*? The name sounds as if it were invented on purpose. You wouldn't have thought it was a new Athens if you had seen it in the 'seventies, still less if you saw it to-day, though it still stretches up the acclivity into the Place Pigalle opposite the fountain, the last house of a block of buildings. In my day it was a café of *ratés*, literary and pictorial. Duranty, one of the original Realists, a contemporary of Flaubert, turned in to stay with us for an hour or so every night; a quiet, elderly man who knew that he had

failed, and whom failure had saddened. Alexis Céard, and Hennique came in later. At the time I am speaking of Zola had ceased to go to the café, he spent his evenings with his wife; but his disciples—all except Maupassant and Huysmans (I do not remember ever having seen them there)—collected every midnight about the marble tables, lured to the Nouvelle Athènes by their love of Art. One generation of *littérateurs* associates itself with painting, the next with music. The aim and triumph of the Realist were to force the pen to compete with the painter's brush, and the engraver's needle in the description, let us say, of a mean street, just as the desire of a symbolistic writer was to describe the vague but intense sensations of music so accurately that the reader would guess the piece he had selected for description, though it were not named in the text. We all entertained doubts regarding the validity of the Art we practised, and envied the Art of the painter, deeming it superior to literature; and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that we used to weary a little of conversation among ourselves, just as dogs weary of their own society, and I think there was a feeling of relief among us all when the painters came in. We raised ourselves up to welcome them—Manet, Degas, Renoir, Pissarro, Monet, and Sisley; they were our masters. A partition rising a few feet or more over the hats of the men sitting at the four marble tables separated the glass front from the main body of the café; two tables in the right-hand corner were reserved for Manet and Degas, and it is pleasant to remember my longing to be received into that circle, and my longing to speak to Manet, whom I had begun to recognise as the great new force in painting. But evening after evening went by without my daring to speak to him, nor did he speak to me, until one evening—thrice happy evening!—as I sat thinking of him, pretending to be busy correcting proofs. He asked me if the conversation of the café did not distract my attention, and I answered: No, but you do, so like are you to your painting. It seems to me that we became friends at once, for I was

invited to his studio in the Rue d'Amsterdam, where his greatest works were painted—all the works that are Manet and nothing but Manet, the real Manet, the Parisian Manet. But before speaking of his painting some description of his personality is essential to an understanding of Manet. It is often said that the personality of the artist concerns us not, and in the case of bad Art it is certainly true, for bad Art reveals no personality, bad Art is bad because it is anonymous. The work of the great artist is himself, and, being one of the greatest painters that ever lived, Manet's Art was all Manet; one cannot think of Manet's painting without thinking of the man himself. The last time I saw Monet was at dinner in the Café Royal, and, after talking of many things, suddenly, without any transition, Monet said, speaking out of a dream: How like Manet was to his painting! and I answered delighted, for it is always exciting to talk about Manet: Yes, how like! That blond, amusing face, the clear eyes that saw simply, truly, and quickly. And having said so much, my thoughts went back to the time when the glass door of the café grated upon the sanded floor, and Manet entered. Though by birth and by education essentially Parisian, there was something in his appearance and manner of speaking that often suggested an Englishman. Perhaps it was his dress—his clean-cut clothes and figure. That figure! Those square shoulders that swaggered as he went across the room, and the thin waist; the face, the beard, and the nose, satyr-like shall I say? No, for I would evoke an idea of beauty of line united to that of intellectual expression—frank words, frank passion in his convictions, loyal and simple phrases, clear as well-water, sometimes a little hard, sometimes as they flowed away bitter, but at the fountain-head sweet and full of light.

A man is often well told in an anecdote, and I remember a young man whom Manet thought well of, bringing his sister with him to the studio in the Rue Amsterdam—not an ill-looking girl, no better and no worse than another, a little commonplace, that was all. Manet was affable and charming;

he showed his pictures, he talked volubly, but next day when the young man arrived and asked Manet what he thought of his sister, Manet said, extending his arm (the gesture was habitual to him): The last girl in the world I should have thought was your sister. The young man protested, saying Manet had seen his sister dressed to her disadvantage—she was wearing a thick woollen dress, for there was snow on the ground. Manet shook his head. I haven't to look twice; I'm in the habit of judging things.

These were his words, or very nearly, and they seem to me to throw a light upon Manet's painting. He saw quickly and clearly, and stated what he saw candidly, almost innocently. It was not well mannered perhaps to speak to a brother of his sister in those terms, but we have not come here to discuss good manners, for what are manners but the conventions that obtain at a certain moment, and among a certain class? Well-mannered people do not think sincerely, their minds are full of evasions and subterfuges. Well-mannered people constantly feel that they would not like to think like this or that they would not like to think like that, and whosoever feels he would not like to think out to the end every thought that may come into his mind should turn from Parnassus. In his search for new formulas, new moulds, all the old values must be swept aside. The artist must arrive at a new estimate of things; all must go into the melting-pot in the hope that out of the pot may emerge a new consummation of himself. For this end he must keep himself free from all creed, from all dogma, from all opinion, remembering that as he accepts the opinions of others he loses his talent, all his feelings and his ideas must be his own, for Art is a personal rethinking of life from end to end, and for this reason the artist is always eccentric. He is almost unaware of your moral codes, he laughs at them when he thinks of them, which is rarely, and he is unashamed as a little child. The word unashamed perhaps explains Manet's art better than any other. It is essentially unashamed, and in speaking of him one must never be afraid

to repeat the word unashamed. Manet was born in what is known as refined society; he was a rich man; in dress and appearance he was an aristocrat; but to be aristocratic in Art one must avoid the aristocracy, and Manet was obliged for the sake of his genius to spend his evenings in the café of the Nouvelle Athènes, for there he found artists, lacking in talent, perhaps, but long haired, shabbily dressed, outcasts by choice and conviction, and from them he could get that which the artist needs more than all else—appreciation. He needed the *rapin* as the fixed star needs the planet, and the faith of the *rapin* is worth more to the artist than the bosom of the hostess, though she thrives in the Champs Élysées. The *rapin* helped Manet to live, for in the years I knew him he never sold a picture, and you will ask yourselves and wonder how it was that in a city like Paris great pictures should remain unsold. I will tell you. In many ways Paris is more like the rest of the world than we think for; the moneyed man in Paris, like the moneyed man in London, admires pictures in proportion as they resemble other pictures, but the *rapin* likes pictures in proportion as they differ from other pictures.

After Manet's death his friends made some little stir; there was a sale, and then the prices sank again, sank almost to nothing, and it seemed as if the world would never appreciate Manet. There was a time, fifteen or sixteen years ago, when Manet's pictures could have been bought for twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty pounds apiece, and I remember saying to Albert Wolff, some years after Manet's death: How is it that Degas and Whistler and Monet have come into their inheritance, but there is no sign of recognition of Manet's Art? Wolff answered: The time will never come when people will care for Manet's painting; and I left Tortoni's asking myself if the most beautiful painting the world had ever seen was destined to remain the most unpopular. That was fifteen years ago, and it took fifteen years for the light of Manet's genius to reach Ireland.

I have been asked which of the two pictures hanging

in this room it would be better to buy for the Gallery of Modern Art, the *Itinerant Musician* or the portrait of Mademoiselle Gonzales. Mr. Lane himself put this question to me, and I answered: I am afraid whichever you choose you will regret you had not chosen the other. The picture of the *Itinerant Musician* is a Spanish Manet, it was painted after Manet had seen Goya, but it is a Manet as much as the portrait of Mademoiselle Gonzales; to any one who knows Manet's work it possesses all the qualities which we associate with Manet. All the same, there is a veil between us and Manet in the Spanish picture. The veil is very thin, but there is a veil; the larger picture is Manet and Goya, but the portrait is Manet and nothing but Manet. And the portrait is an article of faith, for it says. Be not ashamed of anything but to be ashamed. There are Manets that I like more, but the portrait of Mademoiselle Gonzales is what Dublin needs. Salvation comes like a thief in the night, and it may be that Mademoiselle Gonzales will be purchased; if so, it will perhaps help to bring about the crisis we are longing for—that spiritual crisis when men shall begin once more to think out life for themselves, when men shall return to Nature naked and unashamed.

The glass door of the café grates upon the sand again, and Degas enters, a round-shouldered man in a suit of pepper-and-salt. Now there is nothing very trenchantly French about him, except the large necktie. His eyes are small, his words sharp, ironical, cynical. Degas and Manet are the leaders of the Impressionistic school, and their friendship has been jarred but once, when Degas came to the Rue Amsterdam and sat with his back to the pictures, saying that his eyes were too weak to look at them. If your eyes are too weak you shouldn't have come to see me, Manet answered. Manet is an instinct, Degas an intellectuality, and he believes with Edgar Poe that one becomes original by saying, I will not do a certain thing because it has been done before.

So the day came when Degas had to put *Semiramis* aside for

a ballet girl; the ballet girl had not been painted before; it was Degas who introduced her and the acrobat and the *repasseuse* into art. And remembering that portraits lacked intimacy, he designed Manet sprawling on a sofa indifferent to his wife's music, thinking of the painting he had done that morning, or of the painting he was going to do the next morning. If Leonardo had lived in the nineteenth century, I said, he might have painted like that; and I wandered on through the Louvre thinking of the twain as intellectuals, till Rembrandt's portrait of his wife absorbed me as no other picture had ever done, and perhaps as no other picture will ever do again. The spell that it laid upon me was conclusive; when I approached the eyes faded into brown shadow, but when I withdrew they began to tell the story of a soul—of one who seems conscious of her weakness, of her sex, and the burden of her own special lot—she is Rembrandt's wife, a servant, a satellite, a watcher. The mouth is no more than a little shadow, but what wistful tenderness there is in it! and the colour of the face is white, faintly tinted with bitumen, and in the cheeks some rose madder shows through the yellow. She wears a fur jacket; grey pearls hang in her ears; there is a brooch upon her breast, and a hand at the bottom of the picture passing out of the frame, and the hand reminds us, as the chin does, of the old story that God took a little clay, etc., for the chin and hand and arm are moulded without display of knowledge as Nature moulds.

The *Mona Lisa*, celebrated in literature, hanging a few feet away, seems factitious when compared with this portrait; her hesitating smile which held my youth in a little tether has come to seem to me but a grimace, and the pale mountains no more mysterious than a globe or map seems at a distance, a sort of riddle, an acrostic, a poetical decoction, a ballade, a rondel, a villanelle, or ballade with double burden, a sestina or chant royal. The *Mona Lisa*, being literature in intention rather than painting, has drawn round her many poets, and we must forgive her many mediocre verses for the sake of a

prose passage that our generation had by heart. The *Mona Lisa* and Degas's *Leçon de Danse* are thoughtful pictures painted with the brains rather than with the temperaments; and we ask sooner or later, but assuredly we ask, of what worth are Degas's descriptions of washerwomen and dancers and racehorses compared with that fallen flower, that Aubusson carpet, above all, the footstool? and if any one of Degas's pictures is bought for this gallery I hope it will be one of these early pictures, the red-headed girl, for instance, an unfinished sketch, exhibited some time ago at Knightsbridge, the property, I believe, of Durand Ruel.

In the days of the Nouvelle Athènes we used to repeat Degas's witticisms, how he once said to Whistler, Whistler, if you were not a genius you would be the most ridiculous man in Paris. Leonardo made roads, Degas makes witticisms. I remember his answer when I confided to him one day that I did not care for Daumier—the beautiful *Don Quixote and Sancho Panza* that hangs on the wall I had not then seen; that is my apology, an insufficient one, I admit. Degas answered, If you were to show Raphael a Daumier he would admire it, but if you were to show him a Cabanel he would say with a sigh: That is my fault—an excellent quip. But we should not attach the same importance to a quip as to a confession. Manet said to me: I tried to write, but I couldn't; and we must esteem these words as an artist's brag; I am a painter, and only a painter. Degas could not boast that he was a painter and only a painter, for he often wearied of painting; he turned to modelling, and he abandoned modelling for the excitement of collecting pictures—not for himself but for the Louvre. I've got it, he said to me in the Rue Maubeuge, and he was surprised when I asked him what he had got; great egotists always take it for granted that every one is thinking of what they are doing. Why, the *Jupiter*, of course the *Jupiter*, and he took me to see the picture—a Jupiter with beetling brows, and a thunderbolt in his hand. He had hung a pear next to it, a speckled pear on six inches of canvas, one

that used to hang in Manet's studio, and guessing he was about to be delivered of a quip, I waited. You notice the pear? Yes, I said. I hung it next to the *Jupiter* to show that a well-painted pear could overthrow a God. There is a picture by Mr. Sargent in this room—one of his fashionable women. She is dressed to receive visitors, and is about to spring from her chair; the usual words, How do you do, Mary, are upon her crimson lips, and the usual hysterical lights are in her eyes, and her arms are like bananas as usual. There is in this portrait the same factitious surface-life that informs all his pictures, and, recognising fashionable gowns and drawing-room vivacities as the fundamental Sargent, Degas described him as *Le chef de rayon de la peinture*. *Le chef de rayon* is the young man behind the counter who says, I think, madam, that this piece of mauve silk would suit your daughter admirably, ten yards at least will be required. If your daughter will step upstairs, I will take her measure *Vous pouvez me confier votre fille; soyez sûre que je ne voudrais rien faire qui pût nuire à mon commerce.*

Any one, Degas said once to me, can have talent when he is five-and-twenty; it is more difficult to have talent when you are fifty. I remember the Salon in which Bastien Lepage exhibited his *Potato Harvest*, and we all admired it till Degas said, The Bouguereau of the modern movement Then every one understood that Bastien Lepage's talent was not an original but a derivative talent, and when Roll, another painter of the same time, exhibited his enormous picture entitled *Work*, containing fifty figures, Degas said, One doesn't make a crowd with fifty figures, one makes a crowd with five. Quips, merely quips, and there were far too many quips in Degas's life; and I include in my list of quips a great number of ballet girls and racehorses. His butcher's corpulent wife standing before a tin tub was much talked about in our café, until Monet returned after a long absence in the country, bringing with him twenty or thirty canvases, a row of poplars seen in perspective against a grey sky, or a view

of the Seine with a bridge cutting the picture in equal halves, or a cottage shrouded in snow with some low hills. Pissarro admired these, of course, but his preference ran to Sisley, who, he said, was more of a poet ; and should a Sisley come later into this collection, my hope is that it will be a picture I saw years ago in the galleries of George Pettit : the bare wall of a cottage, a frozen pond, and some poplar-trees showing against the first film of light, a vision so exquisite that Constable's art seems in comparison coarse and clumsy.

Monet's art is colder, more external, and those who like to trace individual qualities back to race influence may, if they will, attribute the exquisite reverie which distinguishes Sisley's pictures to his northern blood.

Monet began by imitating Manet, and Manet ended by imitating Monet. They were great friends Manet painted Monet and Madame Monet in their garden, and Monet painted Manet and Madame Manet in the same garden ; they exchanged pictures, but after a quarrel each returned the other his picture. Monet's picture of Manet and his wife I never saw, but Manet's picture of Monet and Madame Monet belongs to a very wealthy merchant, a Monsieur Pellerin, who has the finest collection of Manets and Cézannes in the world. Cézanne exhibited with the Impressionists, but I do not remember having seen him in the Nouvelle Athènes or heard his name mentioned by Manet or Degas. Alexis told us once that he had breakfast with him that morning at the *Moulin de la Galette*, and that Cézanne had arrived in jack-boots covered with mud and had spent thirty francs on the meal, which was an unusual feat in those days and in those districts. Alexis was struck by the resemblance of Cézanne to his pictures. A peasant come straight out of *The Reapers*, he said ; I thought of Manet, and we congratulated ourselves on the advancement of our taste, forgetful that the next generation may speak of Cézanne's portraits as the art of the trowel rather than of the brush. The word masonry must have been in Zola's mind when he exalted Cézanne in *L'Œuvre*, and at the dinner given

to celebrate the publication of the book declared him to be a greater painter than Manet. Both came from Aix; both had talent; and both were denied the exquisite vision and handicraft of Sisley and Verlaine.

Within the Impressionist movement were two women, Mary Casatt, who derived her art from Degas, and Berthe Morisot, who derived hers from Manet. Berthe Morisot married Manet's brother, and there can be little doubt that she would have married Manet if Manet had not been married already. I remember him saying to me once: My sister-in-law wouldn't have been noticed without me; she carried my art across her fan. Berthe is dead, and her pictures are very expensive and picture-dealers do not make presents, but Mary Casatt is alive, she is a rich woman, and I take this opportunity of suggesting that she should be asked to give a picture. After an absence of many years I went to see her and found her blind, but talkative as of yore, and we talked of all the people we had known, till at the end of breakfast she said, There is one we haven't spoken about, perhaps the greatest of all I said, You mean Renoir? And she reproached me with having been always a little indifferent to his art. I don't think that this is true, or if it be true, it is only true in a way. I know of nothing that I would sooner hang in my drawing-room than one of Renoir's bathers, or a portrait of a child in grey fur dressed to be taken to the Bois by her mother. Some of his portraits of children are the most beautiful I know—they are white and flower-like, and therefore very unlike the stunted, leering little monkeys that Sir Joshua Reynolds persuaded us to accept as representative of tall and beautiful English children. I think it was at the end of the 'sixties that Renoir painted the celebrated picture of the woman looking into the canary cage—a wonderful picture, but so unlike his later work that it may be doubted if anybody would recognise it as being by the man who painted the bathers. By the bathers I mean all the plump girls whom he painted on green banks under trees, their fat so permeated

with light that they seem like luminous flowers; yet they are flesh, and full-blooded flesh that would bleed. It may be that Manet never painted naked flesh so realistically. His art is less casual, less modern, less actual, than Renoir's. It came out of a different tradition, and upon it is the birthmark of easy circumstances and the culture thereof; whereas Renoir was a Parisian workman; he began life in a factory painting flowers, and his talent was not sufficient to redeem his art from the taint of an inherited vulgarity. Whistler would have cried for an umbrella to hide himself under were he asked to consider *The Umbrellas*.

The man I see when my thoughts return to the Nouvelle Athènes is a tall, lean man with red in his ragged hair and beard, and his voice has a ring in it. If Renoir had not been an aesthete he would have been a Socialist orator. Some of his denunciations are quoted in *Confessions of a Young Man*, and here is an anecdote that a few may think instructive. Money suddenly began to accumulate at his bank, and he bethought himself of a stock of wine and cigars, a carriage, several suits of clothes, or a flat in the quarter of the Champs Élysées with a mistress in it. But turning from these legitimate issues, he went to Venice to study Tintoretto, and on his return to Paris he laboured in a school of art until it became plain to him that his studies, instead of decreasing, were increasing the distance between himself and Tintoretto. I remember his embittered, vehement voice in the Nouvelle Athènes, and I caught a glimpse of his home life on the day that I went to Montmartre to breakfast with him, and finding him, to my surprise, living in the same terrace as Paul Alexis, I asked: Shall we see Alexis after breakfast? He would waste the whole of my afternoon, Renoir muttered, sitting here smoking cigars and sipping cognac; and I must get on with my picture. Marie, as soon as we have finished, bring in the asparagus, and get your clothes off, for I shall want you in the studio when we have had our coffee.

The evenings that Pissarro did not come to the Nouvelle

Athènes were so rare that I cannot think of the Nouvelle Athènes without seeing him in the far corner on the right, listening to Manet and Degas, approving of all they said. I remember his pictures, many of them, as well as his white beard and hair, and nose of the race of Abraham. He figures in *Confessions of a Young Man*, and turning to this youthful book I find an appreciation of him, and, as I think to-day as I thought then, I will quote it. Speaking of a group of girls gathering apples in a garden, I wrote: Sad greys and violets, beautifully harmonised with figures that seem to move as in a dream on the thither side of life, in a world of quiet colour and perfect resignation. But the apples will never fall from the branches, the baskets of the stooping girls will never be filled, for the orchard is one that life has not for giving, that the painter has set in an eternal dream of violet and grey, an apple orchard with peasants gathering the spare fruit of the mildew collected on a planet's surface. The picture in the present exhibition represents Pissarro in his first period, when he followed Corot; I hope Dublin will acquire it. And having said this much, my thoughts return to the last time I spoke with this dear old man, so like himself and his race. It was at Rouen about six years ago, whither he had gone to paint the Cathedral. For Monet having painted the Cathedral, why not he likewise? Why not, indeed? for he always followed somebody's dream. But though his wanderings were many and sudden, he never quite lost his individuality, not even when he painted yachts after the manner of Signac.

Who had invented Impressionism? was asked when he died, and attempts were made to trace Monet back to Turner. Monet, it was said, had been to England, and in England he must have seen Turner, and it was impossible to see Turner without being influenced by Turner. Yes! Monet was in England many times, and he painted in England, and one day we went together to an Exhibition of Old Masters in Burlington House, and there we saw a picture for which many

thousands of pounds had just been paid, and Monet said, Is that brown thing your great Turner? It is true, the picture we were looking at was not much more interesting than brown paper, and I told him that Turner had painted other pictures that he would like better, *The Frosty Morning*, and he said he had seen it, remarking that Turner had painted that morning with his eyes open. Whistler liked *Calais Pier* better than *The Frosty Morning*, for it was more like his own painting, and no very special discernment is required to understand that Turner and Constable could not have influenced painters whose desire was to dispense altogether with shadow. Whether, by doing so, they failed sometimes to differentiate between a picture and a strip of wallpaper is a question that does not come within the scope of the present inquiry. Mr. Lane is asking us to consider if a collection of Impressionist pictures would benefit Dublin, and it seems to me certain that Manet, Monet, Sisley, and Renoir are more likely to draw our thoughts to the beauty of this world than a collection of Italian pictures gathered from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

VII

As soon as the applause died away, Yeats who had lately returned to us from the States with a paunch, a huge stride, and an immense fur overcoat, rose to speak. We were surprised at the change in his appearance, and could hardly believe our ears when, instead of talking to us as he used to do about the old stories come down from generation to generation he began to thunder like Ben Tillett against the middle classes, stamping his feet, working himself into a great temper, and all because the middle classes did not dip their hands into their pockets and give Lane the money he wanted for his exhibition. When he spoke the words, the middle classes, one would have thought that he was speaking against a personal foe, and we looked round asking each other with our eyes

where on earth our Willie Yeats had picked up the strange belief that none but titled and carriage-folk could appreciate pictures. And we asked ourselves why our Willie Yeats should feel himself called upon to denounce his own class; millers and shipowners on one side, and on the other a portrait-painter of distinction; and we laughed, remembering Æ's story, that one day whilst Yeats was crooning over his fire Yeats had said that if he had his rights he would be Duke of Ormonde. Æ's answer was: I am afraid, Willie, you are overlooking your father—a detestable remark to make to a poet in search of an ancestry; and the addition: We both belong to the lower-middle classes, was in equally bad taste. Æ knew that there were spoons in the Yeats family bearing the Butler crest, just as there are portraits in my family of Sir Thomas More, and he should have remembered that certain passages in *The Countess Cathleen* are clearly derivative from the spoons. He should have remembered that all the romantic poets have sought illustrious ancestry, and rightly, since romantic poetry is concerned only with nobles and castles, gonfalons and oriflammes. Villiers de l'Isle Adam believed firmly in his descent, and appeared on all public occasions with the Order of Malta pinned upon his coat; and Victor Hugo, too, had inquired out his ancestry in all the archives of Spain and France before sitting down to write *Hernani* . . . and with good reason, for with the disappearance of gonfalons and donjons it may be doubted if—— My meditation was interrupted by Yeats's voice.

We have sacrificed our lives for Art; but you, what have you done? What sacrifices have you made? he asked, and everybody began to search his memory for the sacrifices that Yeats had made, asking himself in what prison Yeats had languished, what rags he had worn, what broken victuals he had eaten. As far as anybody could remember, he had always lived very comfortably, sitting down invariably to regular meals, and the old green cloak that was in keeping with his profession of romantic poet he had exchanged for the

magnificent fur coat which distracted our attention from what he was saying, so opulently did it cover the back of the chair out of which he had risen. But, quite forgetful of the coat behind him, he continued to denounce the middle classes, throwing his arms into the air, shouting at us, and we thinking not at all of what he was saying, but of a story that had been floating about Dublin for some time. A visitor had come back from Coole telling how he had discovered the poet lying on a sofa in a shady corner, a plate of strawberries on his knee, and three or four adoring ladies serving him with cream and sugar, and how the poet, after wiping his hands on a napkin, had consented to recite some verses, and the verses he recited were these :

I said, A line will take us hours maybe,
Yet if it does not seem a moment's thought
Our stitching and unstitching has been naught.
Better go down upon your marrow-bones
And scrub a kitchen pavement, or break stones
Like an old pauper in all kinds of weather ;
For to articulate sweet sounds together
Is to work harder than all these and yet
Be thought an idler by the noisy set
Of bankers, schoolmasters and clergymen,
The martyrs call the world.

The poet advanced a step or two nearer to the edge of the platform, and stamping his foot he asked again what the middle classes had done for Art, and in a towering rage (the phrase is no mere figure of speech, for he raised himself up to tremendous height) he called upon the ladies and gentlemen that had come to hear my lecture to put their hands in their pockets and give guineas to the stewards who were waiting at the doors to receive them, or, better still, to write large cheques. By virtue of our subscriptions we should cease to belong to the middle classes, and having held out this hope to us he retired to his chair and fell back overcome into the

middle of the great fur coat, and remained silent until the end of the debate.

As soon as it was over criticism began, not of my lecture, but of Yeats's speech, and on Saturday night all my friends turned in to discuss his contention that the middle classes had never done anything for Art. Æ pointed out that the aristocracy had given England no great poet except Byron, whom many people did not look upon as a poet at all, and though Shelley's poetry was unquestionable, he could hardly be considered as belonging to the aristocracy, his father being no more than a Sussex baronet. All the other poets, it was urged, came from the middle classes, not only the poets, but the painters, the musicians, and the sculptors. Yeats's attack upon the middle classes, somebody cried, is the most absurd that was ever made; the aristocracy have Byron, and the peasants have Burns, all the others belong to us. Somebody chimed in: Not even the landowners have produced a poet, and he was answered that Landor was a considerable landed proprietor. But he was the only one. Not a single painter came out of the aristocracy. Lord Carlyle's name was mentioned; everybody laughed, and I said that the distinction of the classes was purely an arbitrary one. It was agreed that if riches can poison inspiration, poverty is a stimulant, and then leaning out of his corner Æ remarked that Willie Yeats's best poems were written when he was a poor boy in Sligo, a remark that fanned the flame of discussion, and the difficult question was broached why Yeats had ceased to write poetry. All his best poems, Æ said, were written before he went to London. Apart from the genius which he brought into the world, it was Sligo that had given his poetry a turn of its own. Everybody knew some of his verses by heart, and we took pleasure in listening to them again. The calves basking on the hillside were mentioned, the colleen going to church. But, somebody cried out suddenly, he took his colleen to London and put paint upon her cheeks and dye upon her hair, and sent her up Piccadilly. Another critic added that the last time he saw

her she was wearing a fine hat and feathers. Supplied by Arthur Symons, cried another. As sterile a little wanton as ever I set eyes upon, who lives in remembrance of her beauty, saying nothing, exclaimed still another critic. And the silences that Yeats's colleen had observed these many years were regretted, somewhat hypocritically I think, for, as Æ says, a literary movement consists of five or six people who live in the same town and hate each other cordially. But, if we were not really sorry that Yeats's inspiration was declining, we were quite genuinely interested to discover the cause of it. Æ was certain that he would have written volume after volume if he had never sought a style, if he had been content to write simply; and all his utterances on the subject of style were repeated.

He came this afternoon into the National Library, John Eglinton said, breaking silence, and he told me he was collecting his writings for a complete edition, a library edition in ten or twelve volumes.

But he is only thirty-seven.

He said his day was over, John Eglinton answered . . . and in speaking of the style of his last essay, he said: Ah, that style! I made it myself. And then another, Longworth I think it was, said that he failed to understand how anybody could speak of a style apart from some definite work already written by him in that style. A style does not exist in one's head, it exists upon paper, and Yeats has no style, neither bad nor good, for he writes no more. Æ thought that Yeats had discovered a style, and a very fine style indeed, and compared it to a suit of livery which a man buys before he engages a servant; the livery is made of the best cloth, the gold lace is the very finest, the cockade can be seen from one side of the street to the other, but when the footman comes he is always too tall or too thin or too fat, so the livery is never worn.

Excellent! cried Gogarty, and the livery hangs in a press upstairs, becoming gradually moth-eaten.

Æ regretted the variants: he knew them all and preferred

the earlier text in every case, and when literary criticism was over we turned to the poet's own life to discover why it was that he sang no more songs for us. We had often heard him say that his poems had arisen out of one great passion, and this interesting avowal raised the no less interesting question—which produces the finer fruit, the gratified or the ungratified passion. It was clearly my turn to speak, and I told how Wesendonck had built a pavilion at the end of his garden so that Wagner might compose the *Valkyrie*, and how at the end of every day when Wagner had finished his work, Mathilde's wont was to visit him, her visits inspiring by degrees a great passion, which, out of loyalty to Wesendonck, they resisted until the fatal day when he read her the poem of *Tristan and Isolde*. After the reading they had stood looking at each other, as Tristan and Isolde stand looking at each other in the opera. Later Minna, Wagner's wife, intercepted a letter which she took to Madame Wesendonck, and the interview between the two women was so violent that Wagner had to send his wife to Dresden. The first letter of the many that he wrote to Mathilde Wesendonck tells the miserable dawning of the day he withdrew from Switzerland to meditate on suicide and his setting of some verses of the well beloved. Regret nothing, he writes from Venice, I beseech you, regret nothing. Your kisses were the crown of my life, my recompense for many years of suffering. Regret nothing, I beseech you, regret nothing. Minna had no doubt as to Richard's guilt nor have we, but the translator of the letters, Mr. Ashton Ellis, and others, have preferred to regard this passion as ungratified, and it is evident that they think that the truth is not worth seeking since the drama and the music and the letters cannot now be affected thereby. For better or worse you have the music, you have the drama, you have the correspondence. What can it matter whether an act purely physical happened, or failed to happen? Everything, I answer, for thereof I learn whether Wagner wrote out of a realised or an unrealised desire. As we sat round the fire I

broke silence. Love, I said, that has *not* been born again in the flesh crumbles like peat ash. Yeats's love for Maud Gonne, said Æ, has lasted for many years and will continue, and I know that it has always been a pure love.

A detestable phrase, Æ, for it implies that every gratified love must be impure. And from that day onward I continued to meditate the main secret of Yeats's life, until one day we happened to meet at Broadstone Station. We were going to the West; we breakfasted together in the train, and after breakfast the conversation took many turns, and we talked of her whom he had loved always, the passionate ideal of his life, and why this ideal had never become a reality to him as Mathilde had become to Richard. Was it really so? was my pressing question, and he answered me:

I was very young at the time and was satisfied with. . . . My memory fails me, or perhaps the phrase was never finished. The words I supply, the spirit of sense, are merely conjectural.

Yes, I understand, the common mistake of a boy; and I was sorry for Yeats and for his inspiration which did not seem to have survived his youth, because it had arisen out of an ungratified desire; and I fell to thinking that hyacinths grown in a vase only bloom for a season. But if it had been otherwise? On such questions one may meditate a long while, and it was not until the train ran into Westport that I remembered my prediction when Symons had shown me *Rosa Alchemica*. His inspiration, I had said, is at an end, for he talks about how he is going to write, and I told Symons that I had noticed all through my life that a man may tell the subject of his poem and write it, but if he tells how he is going to write his poem he will never write it. Mallarmé projected hundreds of poems, and, like Yeats, Mallarmé was always talking about style. The word style never came into Mallarmé's conversation, but, like Yeats, his belief was that the poet should have a language of his own. Every other art, I remember him saying, has a special language—sculpture,

music, painting; why shouldn't the poet have his? He set himself to the task of inventing a language, but it was such a difficult one that it left him very little time for writing; and so we have but twenty sonnets and *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* written in it. *Son œuvre* calls to mind a *bibelot*, a carven nick-nack, wrought ivory, or jade, or bronze, and like bronze it will acquire a patina. His phrases will never grow old, for they tell us nothing; the secret meaning is so deeply embedded that generations will try to puzzle through them; and in the volume entitled *The Wind among the Reeds* Yeats has written poems so difficult that even the adepts could not disentangle the sense; and since *The Wind among the Reeds* he has written a sonnet that clearly referred to a house. But to what house? Æ inclined to the opinion that it referred to the House of Lords, but the poet, being written to from Ely Place, replied that the subject of his sonnet was Coole Park. Mallarmé could not be darker than this. But whereas to write a language apart was Mallarmé's sole aestheticism and one which he never abandoned after the publication of *L'Après-midi d'un Faune*, Yeats advocated two languages, one which he employs himself, another which he would use if he could, but being unable to use it he counsels its use to others, and has put up a sign-post: This way to Parnassus. It is amusing to think of Mallarmé and Yeats together; they would have got on famously until Yeats began to tell Mallarmé that the poet would learn the language he required in Le Berry. Mallarmé was a subtle mind, and he would have thought the idea ingenious that a language is like a spring which rises in the highlands, trickles into a rivulet and flows into a river, and needs no filter until the river has passed through a town; he would have listened to these theories with interest, but Yeats would not have been able to persuade him to set out for Le Berry, and the journey would have been useless if he had, for Mallarmé had no ear for folk, less than Yeats himself, who has only half an ear; an exquisite ear for the beauty of folk imagination, and very little for folk idiom. Are not the ways

of Nature strange? for he loves folk idiom as none has ever loved it, and few have had better opportunities of learning it than he along his uncle's wharves in Sligo Town and among the slopes of Ben Bulben, whither he went daily, interested in birds and beasts and the stories that the folk tell. As pretty a nosegay as ever was gathered he tied on those slopes; there is no prettier book of literature than *Celtic Twilight*, and one of the tales, *The Last Gleeman*, must have put into Yeats's mind the idea that he has followed ever since, that the Irish people write very well when they are not trying to write that worn-out and defaced idiom which educated people speak and write, and which is known as English. And it is Yeats's belief that those among us who refuse to write it are forced back upon artificial speech which they create, and which is often very beautiful; the beauty of Pater's or Morris's cannot be denied, but their speech, Yeats would say, lacks naturalness; it is not living speech, that is how he would phrase it, and his thoughts would go back to Michael Moran, the last of the Gleemen, who, he thinks, was more fortunate than the two great writers mentioned, for Michael wrote (it would be more correct to say he composed, for it is doubtful if he knew how to write) living speech—*i.e.* a speech that has never been printed. Yeats's whole aestheticism is expressed in these words: A speech that has never been printed, and the peasant is the only one who can give us speech that has not appeared in print. But peasant speech limits the range of our ideas. A pure benefit, Yeats would say; we must purify ourselves in ignorance. But peasant speech is only adapted to dialogue. To this objection he might answer with Landor that Shakespeare and the best parts of Homer were written in dialogue, and it would be heartless to reply: But not the best part of your own works, Yeats. Your mind is as subtle as a Brahmin's, woven along and across with ideas, and you cannot catch the idiom as it flows off the lips. You are like Moses, who may not enter the Promised Land. He would not care to answer: Even if what you say be true, you must admit that I have led some

others thither. I beg pardon, there; and he would fold himself up like a pelican and dream of his disciples. His dream was always of disciples; even when I met him in the Cheshire Cheese he was looking for disciples; he sought in vain till he met Lady Gregory. And a great day it was for Ireland when she came over to Tillyra, and met, whom do you think? Yeats, of course. Here I must break off my narrative to give a more explicit account of Lady Gregory than the reader will find in *Ave*.

Lady Gregory is a Persse, and the Persses are an ancient Galway family; the best-known branch is the Moyaude branch, for it was at Moyaude that Burton Persse bred and hunted the Galway Blazers for over thirty years . . . till his death. Moyaude has passed away, but Roxborough continues, never having indulged in either horses or hounds, a worthy but undistinguished family in love, in war, or in politics, never having indulged in anything except a taste for Bible reading in the cottages. A staunch Protestant family, if nothing else, the Roxborough Persses certainly are. Mrs. Persse and her two elder daughters were ardent soul-gatherers in the days gone by, but Lady Gregory did not join them in their missionary work, holding always to the belief that there was great danger in persuading any one to leave the religion learnt in childhood, for we could never be sure that another would find a place in the heart. In saying as much she wins our hearts, but our intelligence warns us against the seduction, and we remember that we may not acquiesce in what we believe to be error. The ignorant and numbed mind cannot be acceptable to God, so do we think, and take our stand with Mrs. Persse and the elder sisters. We are glad, however, though we are not sure that our gladness on such a point is not a sign of weakness, still we are glad that Sir William chose Augusta rather than one of her elder sisters, either of whom would certainly have fired up in the carriage when Sir William, on his way to Coole, suggested to his bride that she should refrain from pointing out to his tenants what she believed to be

a different teaching of the Bible from that which they received from the parish priest. He would probably say: You have made no converts—(we have forgotten Mrs. Shaw Taylor's Christian name, but Agnes will serve our purpose as well as another)—you have made no converts, Agnes, but you have shaken the faith of thousands. The ground at Roxborough has been cleared for the sowing, but Kiltartan can wait. *Which Path Should Agnes Have Followed?* is clearly the title of a six-shilling novel which I pass on to my contemporaries; meanwhile I have pleasure in stating here, for my statement is implicated in an artistic movement, the Abbey Theatre, that the Gospels were never read by Lady Gregory round Kiltartan. I should like to fill in a page or two about her married life, but though we know our neighbours very well in one direction, in another there is nothing that we know less than our neighbours, and Lady Gregory has never been for me a very real person. I imagine her without a mother, or father, or sisters, or brothers, *sans attache*. It is difficult to believe, but it is nevertheless true, that fearing a too flagrant mistake, I had to ask a friend the other day if I were right in supposing that Mrs. Shaw Taylor was Lady Gregory's sister, an absurd question truly, for Mrs. Shaw Taylor's house (I have forgotten its name) is within a mile of Tillyra, and I must have been there many times. We may cultivate our memories in one direction, but by so doing we curtail them in another, and documentary evidence jars my style. I like to write of Lady Gregory from the evening that Edward drove me over to Coole, the night of the dinner-party. There is in the first part of this book a portrait of her as I saw her that night, a slim young woman of medium height and slight figure; her hair, parted in the middle, was brushed in wide bands about a brow which even at that time was intellectual. The phrase previously used, if my memory does not deceive me, was high and cultured; I think I said that she wore a high-school air, and the phrase expresses the idea she conveyed to me—an air of mixed timidity and restrained anxiety. On the whole it was

pleasant to pass from her to Sir William, who was more at his ease, more natural. He spoke to me affably about a Velasquez in the National Gallery, which was not a Velasquez; it is now set down as a Zurbaran, but the last attribution does not convince me any more than the first. He wore the Lord Palmerston air; it was the air of that generation, but he did not wear it nearly so well as my father.

These two men were of the same generation and their interests were the same; both were travelled men; Sir William's travels were not so original as my father's, and the racehorses that he kept were not so fast, and his politics were not so definite; he was more of an opportunist than my father, more careful and cautious, and therefore less interesting. Galway has not produced so many interesting men as Mayo; its pastures are richer, but its men are thinner in intellect. But if we are considering Lady Gregory's rise in the world, we must admit that she owes a great deal to her husband. He took her to London, and she enjoyed at least one season in a tall house in the little enclosure known as St. George's Place; and there met a number of eminent men whose books and conversation were in harmony with her conception of life, still somewhat formal. One afternoon Lecky the historian left her drawing-room as I entered it, and I remember the look of pleasure on her face when she mentioned the name of her visitor, and her pleasure did not end with Lecky, for a few minutes afterwards Edwin Arnold, the poet of *The Light of Asia*, was announced. She would have liked to have had him all to herself, and I think that she thought my conversation a little ill advised when I spoke to Sir Edwin of a book lately published on the subject of Buddhism, and asked him what book was the best to read on this subject. He did not answer my question directly, but very soon he was telling Lady Gregory that he had just received a letter from India from a distinguished Buddhist who had read *The Light of Asia* and could find no fault in it; the Buddhist doctrine as related by him had been related faultlessly. And with this

little anecdote Sir Edwin thought my question sufficiently answered. The conversation turned on the coloured races, and I remember Sir Edwin's words. The world will not be perfect, he said, until we get the black notes into the gamut. A pretty bit of Telegraphese which pleased Lady Gregory; and when Sir Edwin rose to go she produced a fan and asked him to write his name upon one of the sticks. But she did not ask me to write my name, though at that time I had written not only *A Modern Lover*, but also *A Mummer's Wife*, and I left the house feeling for the first time that the world I lived in was not so profound as I had imagined it to be. If I remember the circumstances quite rightly, Sir William came into the room just as I was leaving it, and she showed him the fan; he looked a little distressed at her want of tact, and it was some years afterward that I heard, and not without surprise, that she had shown some literary ability in the editing of his *Memoirs*. The publication of these *Memoirs* was a great day for Roxborough, but not such a great day for Ireland as the day she drove over to Tillyra.

I was not present at the time, but from Edward's account of the meeting she seems to have recognised her need in Yeats at once, foreseeing dimly, of course, but foreseeing that he would help her out of conventions and prejudices, and give her wings to soar in the free air of ideas and instincts. She was manifestly captured by his genius, and seemed to dread that the inspiration the hills of Sligo had nourished might wither in the Temple where he used to spend long months with his friend Arthur Symons. He had finished all his best work at the time, the work whereby he will live; *The Countess Cathleen* had not long been written, and he was dreaming the poem of *The Shadowy Waters*, and where could he dream it more fortunately than by the lake at Coole? The wild swans gather there, and every summer he returned to Coole to write *The Shadowy Waters*, writing under her tutelage and she serving him as amanuensis, collecting the different versions, etc.

Thus much of the literary history of this time has already

been written, but what has not been written, or only hinted at, is the interdependence of these two minds. It was he, no doubt, who suggested to her the writing of the Cuchulain legends. It must have been so, for he had long been dreaming an epic poem to be called *Cuchulain;* but feeling himself unable for so long a task he entrusted it to Lady Gregory, and led her from cabin to cabin in search of a style, and they returned to Coole ruminating the beautiful language of the peasants and the masterpiece quickening in it, Yeats a little sad, but by no means envious toward Lady Gregory, and sad, if at all, that his own stories in the volume entitled *The Secret Rose* were not written in living speech. It is pleasant to think that, as he opened the park gates for her to pass through, the thought glided into his mind that perhaps in some subsequent edition she might help him with the translation. But the moment was for the consideration of a difficulty that had arisen suddenly. The legends of Cuchulain are written in a very remote language, bearing little likeness to the modern Irish which Lady Gregory had learnt in common with everybody connected with the Irish Literary Movement, Yeats and myself excepted. A dictionary of the ancient language exists, and it is easy to look out a word; but a knowledge of Early or Middle Irish is only obtained gradually after years of study; Lady Gregory confesses herself in her preface to be no scholar, and that she pieced together her text from various French and German translations. This method recommends itself to Yeats, who says in his preface that by collating the various versions of the same tale and taking the best bits out of each the stories are now told perfectly for the first time, a singular view for a critic of Yeats's understanding to hold, a strange theory to advocate, the strangest, we do not hesitate to say, that has ever been put forward by so distinguished a poet and critic as Yeats. He was a severer critic the day that he threw out Edward's play with so much indignity in Tillyra. He was then a monk of literature, an inquisitor, a Torquemada, but in this preface he bows to Lady Gregory's taste as if she were

the tale-teller that the world had been waiting for, one whose art exceeded that of Balzac or Turgenev, for neither would have claimed the right to refashion the old legends in accordance with his own taste or the taste of his neighbourhood. I left out a good deal, Lady Gregory writes in her preface, I thought you would not care about. The you refers to the people of Kiltartan, to whom Lady Gregory dedicates her book. It seems to me that Balzac and Turgenev would have taken a different view as to the duty of a modern writer to the old legends ; both would have said : It is never justifiable to alter a legend ; it has come down to us because it contains some precious message, and the message the legend carries will be lost or worsened if the story be altered or mutilated or deformed. And who am I, Balzac would have said, that I should alter a message that has come down from a far-off time, a message often enfolded in the tale so secretly that it is all things to all men ? My province, he would have continued, is not to alter the story, but to interpret it, and we have not to listen very intently to hear him say : Not only I may, I must interpret. There can be little doubt that Yeats is often injudicious in his noble preface, and he exposes Lady Gregory to criticism when he depreciates the translation from which Lady Gregory said she worked. She might have written : Which I quote, for she follows Kuno Meyer's translation of *The Wooing of Emer* sentence by sentence, and it is our puzzle to discover how Kuno Meyer's English is worthless when he signs it and beautiful when Lady Gregory quotes it. A clear case of literary transubstantiation, I said, speaking of the miracle to a friend who happened to be a Roman Catholic, and she gave me the definition of the catechism : the substance is the same, but the accident is different. Or it may have been : the incident is the same and the substance is different ; one cannot always be sure that one remembers theology correctly. A little examination, however, of Lady Gregory's text enabled us to dismiss the theological aspect as untenable. Here and there we find she has altered the

words; Kuno Meyer's title is *The Wooing of Emer*; Lady Gregory has changed it to *The Courting of Emer* (she is writing living speech); and if Kuno Meyer wrote that Emer received Cuchulain in her bower, Lady Gregory, for the same reason, would certainly change it to: she asked him into her parlour. The word lawn in the sentence: and as the young girls were sitting together on their bench on the lawn they heard coming toward them a clattering of hooves, the creaking of a chariot, the grating of wheels, belongs to Lady Gregory; of that I am so sure that it would be needless for me to refer to Kuno Meyer's version of the legend.

No light diadem of praise Yeats sets on Lady Gregory's brow when he says that she has discovered a speech, beautiful as that of Morris, and a living speech into the bargain. He continues, that as she moved among her people she learnt to love the beautiful speech of those who think in Irish, and to understand that it is as true a dialect of English as the dialect that Burns wrote in. But when we look into the beautiful speech that Lady Gregory learnt as she moved among her people, we find that it consists of no more than a dozen turns of speech, dropped into pages of English so ordinary, that redeemed from these phrases it might appear in any newspaper without attracting attention. And she does not seem to have inquired if the phrases she uses are merely local or part of the English language; she writes again and again a phrase which we find in *The Burial of Sir John Moore*, evidently under the impression that she is writing something extremely Irish:

> That the foe and the stranger should tread o'er his head,
> And we far away on the billow.

It would seem that in the opinion of many the line: And we far away on the billow, marks the poem as having been written by an Irishman, a careless criticism, for it is certain that the turn of speech referred to is to be found in Shakespeare, in Milton, in Morris, even in Dickens. It is heard in

England in everyday speech, though not so often as it is heard in Ireland, but it is heard, and it was a mistake on Lady Gregory's part to accept it as characteristically Irish. And her mistake shows how very little thought she gave to the question of idiomatic speech. She writes: he, himself, instead of omitting the parasitical he as she might very well have done. The omission would have suggested Ireland without any violation to the English language; and her attitude toward the verb to be is quite unconsidered and commonplace. She does not seem to have realised that in Ireland the verb to be is used to imply continuous action; and it seems to me very important to have noticed that Irish English and Provincial English preserve a distinction that has disappeared from English as spoken in polite society and taught at Oxford and Cambridge. Everybody in Ireland and a great many among the English middle classes still say: I shall be seeing So-and-so to-night and will tell him, etc., and everybody in Ireland and a great number among the English middle classes still say: Will you be having your letters sent on, which is surely richer English than: Will you have your letters sent on? My parlourmaid always says: Will you be dressing for dinner to-night? and: Will you be wearing your silk hat to-night? thereby distinguishing between a simple and a continuous future action. It is our parlourmaids and their likes that carry on these subtleties of tense, a much more important point than the aspiration of the letter h. I have heard of something called Extension Lectures at Oxford and Cambridge, but, without having the least notion of what is meant by extension lectures, I would suggest that some of the yeomen of Oxfordshire should be sent for to teach the professors, learned, no doubt, in the Latin and Greek languages, but who have no English.

But the efforts of the uneducated to teach the educated would be made in vain; the English language is perishing and it is natural that it should perish with the race; race and grammatical sense go together The English have striven—

and done a great deal in the world; the English are a tired race, and their weariness betrays itself in the language, and the most decadent of all are the educated classes. We say in Ireland: I am just after feeding the birds, and this is a richer phrase, faintly different from: I have just fed the birds. All these delicate shades have dropped out of modern English; they still exist in the language, but they are no longer used, they are slightly archaic to-day, or provincial; and the source wherefrom the language is refreshed—rural English—is being destroyed by Board-schools. God help the writer who puts pen to paper in fifty years' time, for all that will be left of the language will be a dry shank-bone that has been lying a long while on the dust-heap of empire.

The difference between rural and urban speech should have been studied by Lady Gregory, but we fear she has not given a thought to it; she was just content to pepper her page with a few idiomatic turns of speech which she very often does not use correctly. It is what I think, said Ferogain, that it is the fire of Conaire, the High King, and I would be glad he not to be there to-night, for it would be a pity if harm would come on him or his life be shortened, for he is a branch in its blossom. To my ear—and I come from the same country as Lady Gregory—this is not living speech. What the Galway, and I may add the Mayo, peasant would say is: And it's glad I'd be if he wasn't there to-night. We read on and at the end of about ten lines we come upon: What use will it be I to speak to him? And then her pen fills up another page before she thinks it necessary to drop in: A welcome before you, a pretty phrase which may be idiom, though I have never heard it in either Mayo or Galway. We turn the leaves and catch sight of: And it's you have what all the men of Ulster are wanting in. If we continued a little further it is quite possible we should come upon: And they do be saying, and: It is what I think, but we should not meet anywhere in the book an attempt to make, to mould, or to fashion a language out of the idiom of the Galway peasant, and it is

astonished I am altogether that Yeats could have brought himself to compare this patchwork to the beautiful speech of Morris or of Burns, and to speak of the manuscripts that were consulted, for Lady Gregory says herself in her preface that she cannot read the manuscripts, but has translated from the French and German versions of the stories. And it is mighty hard to know how he could have reconciled himself to the adaptation of barbaric tales to the drawing-room. He must have often said to himself: She wouldn't bowdlerise the Bible in the interests of the drawing-room. And the constant repetition of a phrase like: And it wasn't a chair they gave him but a stool, and it not in the corner, must have ended by boring him, for no one is so easily bored by the repetition of a phrase as Yeats; it must have been that phrase that drove him out of Coole and sent him off again in pursuit of the golden-haired Isolde, whom, perhaps, the poet missed or found in Brittany or in Passy.

And it was on one of those journeys that he discovered Synge, a man of such rough and uncultivated aspect that he looked as if he had come out of Derrinrush. He was not a peasant as Yeats first supposed, but came, like all great writers, from the middle classes; his mother had a house in Kingstown which he avoided as much as possible, and it was in the Rue d'Arras that Yeats found him, *dans une chambre meublée* on the fifth floor. He was on his way back to Ireland, and might stay at Kingstown for a while, till his next quarter's allowance came in (he had but sixty pounds a year), but as soon as he got it he would be away to the West, to the Arran Islands. Yeats gasped; and it was the romance of living half one's life in the Latin Quarter and the other half in the Arran Islands that captured Yeats's imagination. He must have lent a willing ear to Synge's tale of an unpublished manuscript, a book which he had written about the Arran Islands; but his interest in it doubtless flagged when Synge told him that it was not written in peasant speech. Synge must have answered: But peasant speech in Arran is Irish. Yeats

remembered with regret that this was so, for he would have preferred Anglo-Irish; and he listened to Synge telling him that he had some colloquial knowledge of the Irish language. He had had to pick up a little Irish; life in Arran would be impossible without Irish, and Yeats awoke from his meditation.

This strange Irishman was a solitary, who only cared to talk with peasants, and was interested in things rather than ideas. In the Rue d'Arras it must have been Yeats that did all the admiration, and Synge must have been a little bored, but quite willing that Yeats should discover in him a man of genius, a strange experience for Synge, who, however convinced he was inly of his own genius, must have wondered how Yeats had divined it, for Yeats had not pretended to feel any interest in the articles on French writers that Synge had sent round to the English Press, adding thereby sometimes a few pounds to his income, but only sometimes, for these articles were so trite that they were seldom accepted; John Eglinton confesses once a year that he could not stomach the article that Synge sent to him for publication in *Dana;* and they were so incorrectly written that Best, who knew Synge in the Rue d'Arras, tells that he used to go over them, for Synge could not write correctly at that time. Only one out of three was accepted, and the one that came to *Dana* no doubt came with all the edges worn by continual transmission through the post. It is Best that should write about Synge, for he helped him to furnish his room in the Rue d'Arras; Synge was very helpless in the actual affairs of life; he could not go out and buy furniture; Best had to go with him, and they brought home a mattress and some chairs and a bed on a barrow, and then returned to fetch the rest. There was a fiddle hanging on the wall of the garret in the Rue d'Arras, but as Synge never played it, Best began to wonder if Synge could play, and as if suspecting Best of disbelief in his music, Synge took it down one evening and drew the bow across the strings in a way that convinced Best, who played the fiddle himself; and, as if satisfied, he returned the fiddle to its nail,

saying that he only played it in the Arran Islands in the evenings when the peasants wanted to dance. They have no ear for music, he said, and do not recognise a melody. What! exclaimed Best. Only as they recognise the cry of a bird or animal, not as a musician. Only the beat of the jig enters their ears, Best replied in a voice tinged with melancholy.

In Yeats's imagination, playing the fiddle to the Arran Islanders, and reciting poems to them, are one and the same thing, and he recognised instantly in Synge the Gleeman that was in himself, but had remained, and would remain for ever, unrealised; and his imagination caught fire at the conjunction of the Rue d'Arras and the Arran Islands. And whosoever has followed this narrative so far can see Yeats leaning forward in Synge's chair, getting more and more interested in him at every moment, his literary passions rising till they carried him to his feet and set him walking about the dusty carpet from the window to the table at which Synge worked, crying: Come to Ireland and write folk-plays for me. A play about Arran.

But the play I've shown you——

Is of no account. The language will help you to know your own people.

And, better than any description, this dialogue represents the meeting of Yeats and Synge in the Rue d'Arras, Synge's large impassive face into which hardly any light of expression ever came, listening to Yeats with a look of perplexity moving over its immobility, and Yeats's passion, purely literary, steadily mounting. You must come back and perfect yourself in the language; you must live among the people again, he reports himself to have said. You must come to Ireland. A theatre is building in Dublin for the production of folk-plays, or soon will be building; and he told Synge how Miss Horniman, a lady of literary tastes and ample income, had decided to give to Dublin what no other city in an English-speaking country possessed—a subventioned theatre. Write me an Arran play. We will open the theatre with it; and he began

to speak of Synge's immediate return to Arran. I should die, Synge is reported to have answered. Not before you have written the masterpiece, Yeats answered, and he continued day after day to subjugate Synge's mind, till one Saturday evening, after a talk lasting till long past midnight, Synge declared his adherence to the new creed of living speed.

When a man's mind is made up, his feet must set out on the way, Yeats replied. Synge acquiesced, and when he had received two little cheques which were due to him for articles, he folded his luggage according to promise, and a few days after presented himself at the Nassau Hotel, and was introduced to Lady Gregory, who encouraged him to confide in her; and he told her the story of his health, and she very kindly took his part against Yeats, who was all for Arran, not for the middle island, for there only Irish is spoken. And the dialect is what we want. That may be, Mr. Yeats, but Mr. Synge may not be able to stand the climate in the autumn. And she turned to Synge, who told her that the best time would be a little later, when the people would be out digging in their potato fields. Lady Gregory agreed that this was so, and after some demur Yeats yielded, as he always does to Lady Gregory, and the three were of one mind that the mild climate of Wicklow was suitable to Synge's health, and also to the study of living speech, for the tinkers met in Wicklow in the autumn, Yeats cried. You mustn't miss the gathering. And a few days later Synge wrote that he had been fortunate enough to fall in with a band of tinkers. He had heard a tall, lean man cry after a screaming girl: Black Hell to your sowl! you've followed me so far, you'll follow me to the end! And driving their shaggy ponies and lean horses up a hillside, the tinkers made for their annual assemblage, exchanging their wives and arranging the roads they were to take, the signs to be left at the cross roads, the fairs they were to attend, and the meeting-places for the following year. But this was not all the good news. Synge had gained the good-will of a certain tinker and his wife, and was learning

their life and language as they strolled along the lanes, cadging and stealing as they went, squatting at eventide on the side of a dry ditch. Like a hare in a gap he listened, and when he had mastered every turn of their speech he left the tinker and turned into the hills, spending some weeks with a cottager, joining a little later another group of tinkers accompanied by a servant-girl who had suddenly wearied of scrubbing and mangling, boiling for pigs, cooking, and working dough, and making beds in the evening. It would be better, she had thought, to lie under the hedgerow; and in telling me of this girl, Synge seemed to be telling me his own story. He, too, disliked the regular life of his mother's house, and preferred to wander with the tinkers, and when tired of them to lie abed smoking with a peasant, and awake amid the smells of shag and potato-skins in the sieve in the corner of the room. In answer to an inquiry how the day passed in the cottage, he told me that after breakfast he scrambled over a low wall out of which grew a single hawthorn, and looked round for a place where he might loosen his strap, and when that job was done he kept on walking ahead thinking out the dialogue of his plays, modifying it at every stile after a gossip with some herdsman or pig-jobber, whomever he might meet, returning through the cold spring evening, when the stars shine brightly through the naked trees, licking his lips, appreciating the fine flavour of some drunkard's oath or blasphemy.

Yeats was at this time in the hands of the Fays and a Committee, and the performances of the National Theatre were given in different halls; and when Synge came up from the country to read *Riders to the Sea* to the company, Yeats, who did not wish to have any misunderstanding on the subject, cried: Sophocles! across the table, and, fearing that he was not impressive enough, he said: No, Æschylus! And that same afternoon he said to me in Grafton Street: I would I were as sure of your future and of my own as I am of Synge's. Irishmen, he said, had written well before Synge, but they

had written well by casting off Ireland; but Synge was the first man that Ireland had inspired; and I asked if he were going to find his fortune in Ireland, his literary fortune, for *The Well of the Saints* had very nearly emptied the Abbey Theatre. We were but twenty in the stalls: the Yeats family, Sarah Purser, William Bailey, John Eglinton, Æ, Longworth, and dear Edward, who supported the Abbey Theatre, though he was averse from peasant plays. All this sneering at Catholic practices is utterly distasteful to me, he said to me. I can hear the whining voice of the proselytiser through it all. I never will go against my opinions, and when I hear the Sacred Name I assure you—— You mean the name of God, Edward, don't you? I never like to mention it. The Sacred Name is enough. But if you are speaking French you say Mon Dieu at every sentence. If it isn't wrong in one language, how can it be wrong in another? A smile trickled across Edward's face, round and large and russet as a ripe pumpkin, and he muttered: *Mon ami Moore, mon ami Moore.*

He was in the Abbey the first night of the *Playboy*, and on my return from Paris he told me that though the noise was great, he had heard enough blasphemy to keep him out of the theatre thenceforth, and next morning he had read in the papers that Ireland had been exhibited in a shameful light as an immoral country. And oddly enough, the scene of the immorality is your own native town, George. He told me that the hooting had begun about the middle of the third act at the words: If all the women of Mayo were standing before me, and they in their—— He shrank from completing the sentence, and muttered something about the evocation of a disgusting spectacle.

I agree with you, Edward, that shift evokes a picture of blay calico; but the delightful underwear of Madame——

Now, George.

And then, amused at his own folly, which he can no more overcome than anybody else, he began to laugh, shaking like

a jelly, puffing solemnly all the while at his churchwarden.

The indignation was so great that I thought sometimes the pit was going to break in. Lower the bloody curtain, and give us something we bloody well want, a crowded pit kept on shouting. And looking at Edward I imagined I could see him in the stalls near the stage, turning round in terror, his face growing purpler and purpler. All the same, he said, though the pain that Synge's irreverent remarks caused me is very great, I disapprove altogether of interrupting a performance. But Yeats shouldn't have called in the police. A Nationalist should never call for the police.

But, Edward, supposing a housebreaker forces his way in here or into Tillyra?

He said that that was different, and after wasting some time in discussion regarding the liberty of speech and the rights of property, he asked me if I had read the play, and I told him that on reading about the tumult in the Abbey Theatre I had telegraphed from Paris for a copy, and that the first lines convinced me that Ireland had at last begotten a masterpiece —the first lines of Pegeen Mike's letter to Mr. Michael O'Flaherty, general dealer, in Castlebar, for six yards of stuff for to make a yellow gown, a pair of boots with lengthy heels on them and brassy eyes, a hat as suited for a wedding day, a fine-tooth comb. Never was there such a picture of peasant life in a few lines; and at every sentence my admiration increased. At the end of the act I cried out: A masterpiece! a masterpiece! Of course, they felt insulted. The girls coming in with presents for the young stranger pleased me, but a cold wind of doubt seemed to blow over the pages when the father came on the stage, a bloody bandage about his head, and—Edward—you're asleep!

No, I'm listening.

So clearly did I see disaster in that bloody bandage that I could hardly read through the third act. But you see nothing in the play.

Yes, I do, only it's a little thing. Shawn Keogh is a very

good character, and the Widow Quinn is not bad either.

But the language, Edward?

You have made up your mind that this play is a masterpiece, but I am not going to give in to you.

But the style, Edward?

It isn't English. I like the Irish language and the English language, but I don't like the mixture; and then puffing at his pipe for a few seconds he said: I like the intellectual drama.

The conversation turned upon Ibsen, and we talked pleasantly until one in the morning, and then bidding him good night I returned to Ely Place, delighted at my own perspicacity, for there could be no doubt that it was the bloody bandage that caused the row in the Abbey Theatre. The language is beautiful, but—— I had admitted to Edward that I had only glanced through the third act, and Edward had answered: If you had read the whole of it you might be of my opinion. It wasn't likely that Edward and I should agree about the *Playboy*, but it might well be that I was judging it hurriedly, and it would have been wiser, I reflected, to have read the play through before attempting to explain why the humour of the audience had changed suddenly, and I resolved to read the play next morning. But my dislike of reading is so great that I overlooked it, and when Yeats came to see me, instead of the praise which he had come to hear, and which he was craving for, he heard some rather vain dissertations and only half-hearted praise. Again my impulsiveness was my ruin. The play would have been understood if it had been read carefully, and the evening would have been one of exaltation, whereas it went by mournfully, Yeats in the chimney-corner listening to suggestions that would preserve the comedy note. He went away depressed, saying, however, that it would be as well that I should write to Synge about his play, since I liked the greater part. But he did not think that Synge would make any alterations. And the letter I sent to Synge was superficial. I hope he destroyed it. He

was glad that his play had pleased me, but he could not alter the third act. It had been written again and again—thirteen times. That is all I remember of his letter, interesting on account of the circumstances in which it was written and the rarity of Synge's correspondence. It is a pity his letter was destroyed and no copy kept; our letters would illuminate the page that I am now writing, exhibiting us both in our weakness and our strength—Synge in his strength, for if the play had been altered we should have all been disgraced, and it was Yeats's courage that saved us in Dublin. He did not argue, he piled affirmation upon affirmation, and he succeeded in the end . . . but we will not anticipate.

But if Dublin would not listen to the *Playboy*, Dublin read the text; edition after edition was published, and we talked the *Playboy* round our firesides. How we talked! Week after week, month after month, the Abbey Theatre declining all the while, till at last the brothers Fay rose in revolt against Yeats's management, accusing him of hindering the dramatic movement by producing no plays except those written by his intimate friends. Yeats repelled the accusation by offering to submit those that he had rejected to the judgment of Professor Tyrrell, a quite unnecessary concession on the part of Yeats, for Willie Fay is but an amusing Irish comedian, and it was presumptuous for him and his brother to set themselves against a poet. They resigned, and one night Yeats came to me with the grave news that the Fays had seceded.

I feel I must talk to somebody he said, flinging himself into a chair.

Æ is the only man who can distribute courage, but Yeats and Æ were no longer friends, and I was but a poor purveyor. It is true that I told him, and without hesitation, that the secession of the Fays was a blessing in disguise, and that now he was master in his own house the Abbey Theatre would begin to flourish, and it would have been well if I had confined myself to pleasant prophesying; but very few can resist the temptation to give good advice. One thing, Yeats, I have

always had in mind, but never liked to tell you ; it is that the way you come down the steps from the stage and stride up the stalls and alight by Lady Gregory irritates the audience, and if you will allow me to be perfectly frank, I will tell you that she is a little too imposing, too suggestive of Corinne or Madame de Staël. Corinne and Madame de Staël were one and the same person, weren't they ? But you don't know, Yeats, do you ? And so I went on pulling the cord, letting down volumes of water upon poor Yeats, who crouched and shivered. The water, always cold, was at times very icy, for instance when I said that his dreams of reviving Jonson's *Volpone* must be abandoned. If you aren't very careful, Yeats, the Academic idea will overgrow the folk.

And Yeats went away overwhelmed, and I saw no more of him for many months, not until it became known that Synge's persistent ill health had at last brought him to a private hospital, where he lay waiting an operation. He lives by the surgeon's knife, Yeats said to me, and I welcomed his advice to save myself from the anguish of going to see a man dying of cancer. And while Synge perished slowly, Gogarty recovered in the same hospital after an operation for appendicitis. One man's scale drops while another goes up. As I write this line I can see Synge, whom I shall never see again with my physical eyes, sitting thick and straight in my armchair, his large, uncouth head, and flat, ashen-coloured face with two brown eyes looking at me, not unsympathetically. A thick, stubbly growth of hair starts out of a strip of forehead like black twigs out of the head of a broom. I see a ragged moustache, and he sits bolt upright in my chair, his legs crossed, his great country shoe spreading over the carpet. The conversation about us is of literature, but he looks as bored as Jack Yeats does in the National Gallery. . . . Synge and Jack Yeats are like each other in this, neither takes the slightest interest in anything except life, and in their own deductions from life ; educated men, both of them, but without aesthetics, and Yeats's stories that Synge read the classics

and was a close student of Racine is a piece of Yeats's own academic mind. Synge did not read Racine oftener than Jack Yeats looks at Titian, and no conclusion should be drawn from the fact that among his scraps of verse are to be found translations from Villon and Marot; they are merely exercises in versification; he was curious to see if Anglo-Irish idiom could be used in poetry. Villon wrote largely in the slang of his time, therefore Villon was selected; and whosoever reads Villon dips into Marot and reads *Une Ballade à Double Refrain*. And that is all, for, despite his beautiful name, Marot is an insipid poet. I am sorry that Yeats fell into the mistake of attributing much reading to Synge; he has little love of character and could not keep himself from putting rouge on Synge's face and touching up his eyebrows. He showed greater discrimination when he said: You will never know as much about French poetry as Arthur Symons. Come to Ireland and write plays for me. And for his great instinct we must forgive him his little sins of reason. He very rightly speaks of Synge as a solitary, and it is interesting to speculate what made him a solitary. Was it the sense that death was lurking round the corner always, and the sense that he possessed no social gifts, that helped to drive him out into the Arran Islands where he knew nobody, and to the Latin Quarter behind the Luxembourg Gardens where nobody knew him? A man soon perceives if he is interested in others and if others are interested in him, and if he contribute nothing and gets nothing, he will slink away as Synge did.

It seemed a cruel fate that decreed that Synge must die before his play could be revived in Dublin, but his fate was cruel from the beginning. Yeats tells me that these lines were found among his papers: I am five-and-twenty to-day; I wonder will the five-and-twenty years before me be as unhappy as those I have passed through. He received Yeats's belief in his genius, and that was all he got from life. He wrote but little, but that little was his own: *Mon verre n'est pas grand, mais je bois dans mon verre*. His last strength he

reserved for *Deirdre*, working at the play whenever he could, determined to finish it before he died. But he wrote slowly, and the disease moved quickly from cell to cell, and before the last writing was accomplished Synge laid aside the pen and resigned himself to death. It is curious that he should have met his old friend Best on his way to the hospital. Best tells these things significantly. He asked Synge if he were going in for an operation. Synge answered no; and when Best called to see him in the hospital, he found Synge clinging to a little hope, though he knew there was none, saying that people often got better when nobody expected them to get better; and he seemed to experience some disappointment when Best did not answer promptly that that was so.

He used to speak of *Deirdre* as his last disappointment; but another awaited him. An hour before he died he asked the nurse to wheel his bed into a room whence he could see the Wicklow mountains, the hills where he used to go for long solitary walks, and he was wheeled into the room, but the mountains could not be seen from the windows; to see them it was necessary to stand up, and Synge could not stand or sit up in his bed, so his last wish remained ungratified, and he died with tears in his eyes.

VIII

Synge's death seems to have done him a great deal of good; he was not cold in his grave when his plays began to sell like hot cakes and a complete edition of his writings was contemplated, comprising the plays and his Wicklow Sketches and The Blasket Islands; the newspaper articles that he had written upon the French poets were sought for and discovered, and, what was still more important, Yeats decreed a revival of the *Playboy* at the Abbey. We were all agog and prayed that the play would be allowed to pass without protest; it

seemed very likely that this would be permitted, for Synge's success had sobered Dublin, especially its journalists. A sad thing it is for a journalist to find the play that he has described as contemptible, as an insult to Ireland, accepted by all the world as a masterpiece, and the newspaper that smells like a musty sacristy held its peace, or only sent one poor little voice to utter a faint squeak in the gallery from time to time. The play was the same, the text was the same, the cast was the same with one exception. The part of the Playboy was entrusted to Fred O'Donovan, and thereby hangs a tale that I should like to tell.

Synge had written the play knowing that the part of Christy Mahon was going to be played by Willie Fay, a little man five feet three or four; allusions to his size had crept into the text, and Willie Fay, who is a true artist, had exhibited Christy Mahon in the conditions of a wayfarer who had been wandering for at least a fortnight, sleeping in a barn when he could find an open door, and a dry ditch when he could not find a barn, and if Willie Fay had been a broad-shouldered, stalwart, fine young fellow, he might have carried the illusion so far as to send some whiffs of Christy across the footlights. But his diminutive appearance, and the very qualities which made him so admirable an exponent of the part of Michael O'Dowd in *The Well of the Saints* were against him in the *Playboy*. An actor's stock-in-trade is his personality, and Fay's personality is of the crab-apple kind, and it was necessary that the story that Christy had to tell should be told with an engaging simplicity; the audience must sympathise with the son whom the father persecuted because he would not marry an old woman; the audience must see the father raise the scythe, and poor Christy the loy, to defend himself. The father is cloven by the loy, but that is an accident. I did not see Willie Fay in the part, but it is easy to imagine how his reading would alienate the sympathy of the audience. He might point to certain passages which would support his reading; no doubt he could; but these are not the passages

that should be brought into light. It just comes to this, that no man living can play the two parts, the Playboy and the blind man in *The Well of the Saints*, any more than any man can play Hamlet and Othello satisfactorily. A different personality is required, and Fred O'Donovan is a well-favoured young man whom any girl would like for his appearance, and he told the story of how he had killed his father, simply, almost innocently, as an unfortunate accident that had happened to him, and Pegeen Mike pitied him. He was no doubt occasionally against the words, but that was unavoidable; the part cannot be played any other way. A few phrases were dropped out here and there; in the second act the bandage was no longer blood-stained, and in the third, when Christy went out to kill his father for the second time, the father came in on all fours; this kept the comedy note, which was in danger of being lost, for Pegeen Mike is very angry with Christy in the third act, believing him to be a mere braggart—the weak spot in the play, but it passes rapidly; and it was interesting to speak about it to Miss Maire O'Neill, who played Pegeen Mike out of a very clear vision of the character and with all the finish of a true artist.

However we look at it, I said, it is difficult to see how Pegeen Mike could have brought the peat from the fire to burn her lover's feet, and three minutes after rush to the door to watch him leaving her for ever; going away with his father back to their own countryside. Miss O'Neill said she didn't think she could speak the words so that the audience would understand that her anger against Christy was simulated. Well, imperfection is often a zest, I answered, and left the theatre thinking that Fate had allowed Synge to accomplish very little; two one-act plays, purely tentative, a three-act play upon an old theme, *The Tinker's Wedding*, and a dramatic version of the legend of *Deirdre*, which it would have been well for me to have read before writing this page, for the printed page alone is veracious; our ears, however quick, cannot take in the whole of a play. But the book is not on the

table, nor in the house, nor at the bookseller's round the corner, and it is well that it isn't, for it is pleasant sometimes to believe that one's ears are trustworthy, and, amid my aural experiences, I have none more agreeable than the music of the dialogue about Naisi's grave, though memory recalls but one tiny phrase: Death is a poor untidy thing. The writing of *Deirdre* in peasant speech was Yeats's idea; and the text bears witness that when Synge had written an act he began to feel that peasant speech is unsuited to tragedy. Only the second and third acts are of much account, only these are finished, and to finish the first act Synge would have had to redeem it from peasant speech, ridiculous and out of place at the court of Kings, though the Kings be but shepherd Kings.* There is less idiom in the second act than in the first, and none at all in the third; and when I mentioned these things to Yeats he told me that Synge had begun to weary of the limitations of peasant speech. . . . It is difficult to imagine Synge writing about the middle classes and their tea-parties, or the upper classes and their motor-cars, and we may exercise our wits trying to discover the turn his talent would have taken, but it is more practical to tell how Lady Gregory came to the rescue of the Abbey Theatre and saved it after the secession of the Fays.

She could write easily and well, and had shown aptitude for writing rural anecdotes in dialogue, and it is an open secret that she was Yeats's collaborator in the *Pot of Broth* and in *Cathleen ni Houlihan;* and feeling that the fate of the movement depended upon her, she undertook the great responsibility of keeping the theatre open with her pen, writing play after play, three or four a year, writing in the space of ten years something like thirty plays. And is there one among us who would undertake such a job of work and accomplish it as well as Lady Gregory? The plays that flowed from her pen so rapidly are not of equal merit, nor is there any one

*Yeats should not have forgotten that Kiltartan was not spoken when Deirdre prophesied.

that compares with the *Playboy*, but all are meritorious, all are conceived and written in the same style. She is herself, in her little plays, a Galway woman telling rural anecdotes that amuse her woman's mind, and telling them gracefully, never trying to philosophise, to explain, but just content to pick her little flower, to place it in a vase for our amusement, and to go on to another flower. *The Rising of the Moon* is a very pretty bit of artless dramatic writing, with a fine folk flavour, hardly written, told as the people would tell it by their firesides. *Hyacinth Halvey* has been played all over the world with success; and one must not look too scornfully at success; a certain measure is necessary in a theatre *Spreading the News* is even more natural than *The Rising of the Moon;* it is just the gossip of a village thrown easily into dramatic form. Nobody could have done Lady Gregory's plays as well as she did them herself, and *The Workhouse Ward* must not be forgotten, a trifle somewhat sentimental, but just what was wanted to carry on the Abbey Theatre, which, for a moment, could do very well without the grim humours of Synge. We must get it into our heads that the Abbey Theatre would have come to naught but for Lady Gregory's talent for rolling up little anecdotes into one-act plays. She has written three-act plays, but her art and her humour and her strength rarely carry her beyond a one-act. The best of her three-act plays is probably *The Image*, in which she sets a whole village prattling; the characters go on talking about very little, yet always talking pleasantly, and we go away pleasantly amused and pleasantly weary. The telling of *The Jackdaw* is a little confused, but whosoever writes thirty plays in ten years will sometimes be sprightly, sometimes confused, sometimes languid, and will sometimes choose subjects that cannot very well be written. She has told that she wrote plays in the first instance because she believed it to be her duty to write for the Abbey Theatre, and afterwards, no doubt, took an interest in the writing for its own sake, and in this her story nowise differs from many another's, chance playing in our

lives a greater part than we would care to admit. She never would have written a play if she had not met Yeats, nor would Synge, who is now looked upon as an artist as great as Donatello or Benvenuto Cellini, and perhaps I should not have gone to Ireland if I had not met Yeats ; and if I had not gone to Ireland I should not have written *The Lake* or *The Untilled Field*, or the book I am now writing.

So all the Irish movement rose out of Yeats and returns to Yeats. He wrote beautiful lyrics and narrative poems from twenty till five-and-thirty, and then he began to feel that his mission was to give a literature to Ireland that should be neither Hebrew, nor Greek, nor French, nor German, nor English—a literature that should be like herself, that should wear her own face and speak with her own voice, and this he could do only in a theatre. We have all wanted repertory theatres and art theatres and literary theatres, but these words are vain words and mean nothing. Yeats knew exactly what he wanted ; he wanted a folk theatre, for if Ireland were ever to produce any literature he knew that it would have to begin in folk, and he has his reward. Ireland speaks for the first time in literature in the Abbey Theatre.

IX

But my thoughts have begun to wander from Synge and Lady Gregory and Yeats to all the critics who have complained that in this book, instead of creating types of character like Esther Waters or Dick Lennox, I have wasted my time describing my friends, mere portrait-painting. But was not Dick Lennox Dick Maitland ? And in writing *Esther Waters* did I not think of one heroic woman ? We all have models, and if we copy the model intelligently, a type emerges. In writing *Patience*, Gilbert thought he was copying Oscar Wilde, whereas he was drawing Willie Yeats out of the womb of Time ; and when Flaubert wrote *Bouvard and Pecuchet* he

thought he was creating, but he was really performing the same kind offices for Plunkett and Gill, giving them names much more significant than the names they are known by in Ireland, but doing no more. A letter from Plunkett regretting that a broken leg prevented him from being present at the great dinner at the Shelbourne Hotel has been alluded to, and he was whirled rapidly before the reader's eyes as he repaired on an outside car to an agricultural meeting with Yeats, but no portrait of him has appeared, and the reader has not heard how we became acquainted. It was dear Edward who brought the meeting about, overriding Plunkett, who is a timid man, and fears to meet any one with a sense of humour; he dreads laughter as a cat dreads cold water. But Edward insisted. You are both public men and you cannot avoid knowing each other sooner or later, and now is the moment for you both to take the plunge.

And one evening at the end of a long summer's day a lean man of medium height, courteous and dignified, clearly of the Protestant ascendancy, came forward through the dusk of a drawing-room—the lamps had just been lighted—to thank me for having accepted his invitation to dinner. I liked his well-designed oval face, his scanty beard, and his eyes pleasantly grey and pleasantly perplexed. A long, straight, well-formed nose divided the face, and a broad strip of forehead lay underneath the brown stubbly crop of hair that covered a small round skull. The arrival of a guest obliged him to turn away, but before doing so he shook hands with me a second time, and in this supplementary handshake it seemed to me that that something which is genuine in him had passed into his hand. What is in the mind transpires in the hand; and this is quite natural, and it is still more natural that what is not in the mind should not transpire in the hand. There is no grip in Gill's hand; one remembers its colour and its dangle, that is all; and his manner, though pleasing, is flimsy; not that Plunkett's manners are hard and disagreeable; on the contrary, they are rather soft and

affable. But there is something pathetic in him which strikes one at first in the brow, in the grey eyes under it, and all over the flat face marked with a prominent nose, and in the hesitancy of his speech, which straggles with his beard, and his exclamation : Er—er—er, without which he cannot speak half a dozen words.

So much did I see of Plunkett in the red twilight, with glimpses through it of silken gowns, of shoulders and arms, all effaced, a dim background. One felt on entering his room that his dinner was not a sexual one. Everybody seemed anxious to speak on what is known as serious subjects, but restrained himself out of deference to the gowns. But as soon as sex had retired cigars were lighted and important matters were on the verge of discussion. Plunkett was visibly relieved, and with brightening face he began to talk. He talked rapidly, he broke down, now he lost the thread and sought for it : Er—er—er, the uneconomic man in his economic holding, er—er—er, is a danger to the State, and the economic man in his uneconomic holding, er—er—er, is probably a greater danger, and to relieve the producer of the cost of distribution is the object of the Co-operative movement. It seemed to me that we could have discovered what he was saying in any sixpenny text-book, but Plunkett was so interested that it is not likely he perceived he was boring the company and me.

Plunkett, I said to myself, is one of those men whose genius is in practical work, and who, in order to obtain foundation for his work, seeks blindly for first principles ; as soon as we get to practical work he will talk quite differently. And I looked forward to questioning him on matters about which I had definite information. But as I was about to speak, a pallid parliamentarian, whose name I have forgotten, weary like myself of the economic man and the uneconomic holding, turned to me to get news of O'Brien, whose headquarters were in the County of Mayo, thinking that as I came from that part of the country, I should be able to tell him something regarding

the chances of an anti-grazing movement. It so happened that I had had that morning a long talk with my agent about Mayo, and forgetful for the moment of my intention to question Plunkett about the egg industry, overborne by a desire to escape from platitudes, I began to repeat all I had heard, saying I could vouch for the facts, my agent being an old friend on whose veracity and accuracy of observation I could depend. The parliamentarian leaned forward anxious to get the truth from me, and whatever information might be picked up on the way, to pad his speeches for the next session; and perhaps what I was saying, by force of contrast with Plunkett's generalities, attracted the attention of those present, and as they leaned forward interested to hear some facts the humour of the situation began to tickle me. The absent O'Brien had become the centre of interest, and a cloud of melancholy appeared in Plunkett's face, his mechanical smile broke down, he seemed troubled and irritated. Then, I thought, it is really true that he delights in his talk of the economic man and the uneconomic holding—er—er—er, and *vice versa;* and I began to doubt if Nature in her endless discrepancies had really created such a discrepancy as I had imagined: a practical man unable to get to practical work before drinking platitudes from a sixpenny text-book. By this time my knowledge of O'Brien's movement was exhausted, and I should have been pleased to change the subject, but the parliamentarian was insistent, and had it not been for the intervention of Plunkett I should not have been able to rid myself of him. But Plunkett, unable to endure rivalry with O'Brien for another moment, turned to the pallid parliamentarian, saying that in two or three years his co-operative followers would be masters of all local assemblies, and he spoke in such a way as to lead the gentleman to understand that enough had been said about O'Brien.

At last my chance seemed to have come to get a word with Plunkett regarding the details of his scheme for the regeneration of Ireland. I was at that time interested in a

Co-operative Egg Society, which had been started at Plunkett's instigation by my brother, who had discovered, after a little experience, that more extended business arrangements were necessary if the profits were to cover the expenses; and knowing more of this matter than I did about O'Brien's anti-grazing movement I moved up toward Plunkett, anxious to hear his opinion and to try and induce him to modify the measures he was taking for spreading these societies all over the country. At the mention of the blessed word co-operation Plunkett's face brightened, and he began to discuss the subject, but in general terms, more, it seemed to me, for the edification of the parliamentarian than for any practical purpose. As I knew from my brother all about the general theory and only wanted to study its application, I returned to the details again and again, going into figures, showing how the system could not be carried out exactly as Plunkett had dreamed it, and having some experience about the conveying of eggs from Pulborough to London (they arrived nearly always broken; true that the South Coast Railway paid for the breakage without murmuring; all the same it was annoying to have one's eggs broken), I tried to learn from him if more reliance could be placed upon Irish railways.

One cannot discuss, I remember him saying, the fate of the individual egg.

But, Plunkett, your whole system rests on the individual egg, a fact which he could not contravene and so he became melancholy again. Nothing, I said to myself, bores him so much as detail. He loves dreaming, like every other Irishman; and we did not see each other for many a month until we met in Gill's rooms in Clare Street, or in the offices of the *Daily Express*, after the Boer War had driven me out of England. The *Daily Express* had been bought by Plunkett, or it had come into Plunkett's control, and Gill had been appointed editor, and feeling, I suppose, that it was necessary to redeem the *Express* from its sectarian tone, Gill dared one day to write of Dr. Walsh as the Archbishop of Dublin,

causing a great uproar among the subscribers. An attack on the Great Southern Railway caused the withdrawal of a great advertisement; but nothing mattered so long as Plunkett and Gill succeeded in convincing Gerald Balfour that what Ireland needed was a new State Department of Agriculture and Art. Like all dreamers, Plunkett is an inveigling fellow, and he inveigled Gerald Balfour, and Gerald Balfour inveigled his brother, and his brother inveigled the ministry, and the end of all this inveigling was a grant of one hundred and seventy thousand a year to found a Department of Agriculture and Art in Ireland. But the inveigler had been inveigled; Gill's ambition stretched beyond mere agriculture; how Art was gathered into the scheme I do not know, probably as a mere makeweight; the mission of the Department was the reformation of Ireland, and, from end to end, the very task that Flaubert's heroes . . . but it would be well to tell my readers who were the heroes of this not very well-known book.

Bouvard and Pecuchet were two little city clerks, who became acquainted in a way that seemed marvellous to both of them. It was their wont to seek a certain bench after dinner, and to spend what remained of their dinner-hour watching the passers-by. One day they took off their hats to mop their brows: Bouvard looked into Pecuchet's, Pecuchet looked into Bouvard's, both were amazed by the coincidence; they had gotten their hats from the same hatter! A great friendship arose out of this circumstance, the twain meeting every day, delighting more and more in each other's company; and when Bouvard inherits considerable wealth he renounces his clerkship and invites Pecuchet to come to live with him. The first thing to do is to get a fine *appartement*, but life in a flat becomes monotonous; they must perforce do something to relieve the tedium of an unmeasured idleness; market gardening strikes their imagination, for a reason which I have forgotten, and having read the best books on the subject of vegetable growing they buy some land, but only to discover after considerable loss of money that the vegetables grown

by their neighbours, ignorant peasants, are far better than theirs and cheaper. It is thirty years since I read *Bouvard and Pecuchet*, but nobody forgets the story of the melon. Bouvard and Pecuchet had learnt all the material facts about the growing of melons from books, and one would have thought that that was enough, but no; the melon is one of the most immoral of vegetables, and if great care be not taken it will contract incestuous alliances with uncles and aunts, sisters and brothers; and Bouvard and Pecuchet were not sufficiently concerned with the morals of their pet. They were content to watch it growing day after day bigger and bigger, exceeding the size of all melons; prodigious, gigantic, brobdingnagian, were the adjectives they murmured. At last the day came to cut the wonderful fruit It was splendid on the table; it had all the qualities that a melon should have, all but one—it was uneatable. Bouvard spat his mouthful into the grate; Pecuchet spat his, I think, out of the window.

Bouvard and Pecuchet turn from agriculture to Druidic remains, and Pecuchet feels that his life would be incomplete without a love adventure. The serving-maid seems to him suitable to his enterprise; and having assurances of her purity from her, emboldened, he follows her into the wood-shed. A painful disease is the strange ending of this romance, and as soon as Pecuchet is restored to health the twain are inspired to write a tragedy. But having no knowledge of dramatic construction they send to Paris for books on the subject, and in these books they read of the faults that the critics have discovered in Shakespeare and Molière and Racine and other famous writers, and they resolve to avoid these faults. Pecuchet wanders from tragedy to Biblical criticism, and no one forgets the scene between him and Monsieur le Curé under a dripping umbrella. Biblical criticism is succeeded by another folly, and then by another; I do not remember the book in detail, but the best-established theories are always being overturned by the simplest fact.

This great book was described as an extravaganza by the critics of the time, and it was said that Flaubert's admiration of human stupidity was so great that he piled absurdity upon absurdity, exceeding the modesty of Nature; but nothing is so immodest as Nature, and when she picked up the theme suggested by Flaubert and developed it, human stupidity gave forth flowers that would have delighted and saddened him, saddened him, for it is difficult to imagine him writing his book if he had lived to watch the Department at work in Ireland. He would have turned away regretfully saying: I have been anticipated; Plunkett and Gill have transferred my dreams into real life; and he would have admitted that some of their experiments equalled those that he had in mind—for instance, the calf that the Department sent to the Cork Exhibition as an example of the new method of rearing calves.

Bouvard and Pecuchet (we will drop the Plunkett and Gill) invited all the Munster farmers to view the animal, and they had been impressed by its appearance, a fine happy beast it seemed to be; but very soon it began to droop, causing a good deal of anxiety, and the news of its death was brought one evening to the Imperial Hotel where Bouvard and Pecuchet were lodging. After a hurried consultation Pecuchet looked at his watch. We have several hours before us to find a similar calf But, Pecuchet, do you think that we are justified, er—er—er, in replacing a dead calf by a healthy one? At this question Pecuchet flamed a little. The honour of the Department is at stake, he said; we must think of the Department. The Department, er—er—er, is judged by its results. Again a light flamed into Pecuchet's eyes, and though he did not say it, it was clear that he looked upon the Department as something existing of and through itself which could not be judged by its mere works. There has been some foul play. Our enemies, he muttered, and sent a telegram to the expert of the Department to come down at once. A post mortem was ordered, but no new fact was discovered, and the advice of the vet. was that the new

method should be abandoned and the second calf be fed upon milk and linseed meal, and upon this natural diet it prospered exceedingly.

Bouvard and Pecuchet's experiments were not limited to teaching the finest herdsmen in the world how to raise cattle; it was necessary that they should spread themselves over the entire range of human activities in order to get rid of the one hundred and seventy thousand a year that the Department was receiving from the State. A good many hundred pounds were lost in a shoe factory in Ballina, but what are a few hundred pounds when one is dealing with one hundred and seventy thousand a year? And there were moments of sad perplexity in the lives of our reformers. A gleam came into Pecuchet's eyes. Have you thought of anything? said Bouvard, and Pecuchet answered that it had just occurred to him it would be a great advantage to Ireland and to the Department if a method could be discovered of turning peat into coal. These experiments will be costly, Pecuchet. How much do you think we can spend? Pecuchet was full of hope, but the factory turned out so complete and sudden a failure that it had to be closed at once. Oyster beds were laid in Galway and given in charge of a young man who had read all that that had ever been written on the subject of oyster culture. The Colonel told me that he met him at a tennis party, and the charming young man, who was a great social advantage to the neighbourhood, explained to the Colonel that Portuguese oysters could only live three or four days in the creek; Whitstables could endure our waters a little longer. The French oyster, he said, is the shortest lived of all.

I thought, said the Colonel, that the object of the Department was to cultivate rather than to destroy oysters.

We are only experimenting; we must have facts, he answered, and next day on their way to the creek the Colonel said: There must be a drain hereabouts, and pointing to one flowing over the oyster beds, he added: I think this accounts for a great deal of the mortality in which you are experiment-

ing. A gloom came into the young man's face and he promised to write up a report for the Department.

I think it was the fishing interests of Galway that next attracted the attention of Bouvard and Pecuchet. The fishermen were in sad need of piers, and the Department undertook the construction of some two or three, but a very few spring tides cast them hither and thither; some of them can still be reached at low tide, some show a few rocks out in the bay, and these are much appreciated by gannets in the breeding season.

Bouvard felt the disappearance of the piers deeply, and so did Pecuchet, but they found consolation in the thought that experimentation is the source of all knowledge, and one day Bouvard said to Pecuchet: Our staff is miserably underpaid. You are quite right, Bouvard, you are a rich man and can do without a salary, but for the honour of the Department it seems to me that I should be placed on a level with the Under-Secretary; we must never forget that ours is a great State Department.

And the twain fell to thinking how some more money might be expended for the good of Ireland. The establishment of a bacon factory was considered, and the advantage lectures on the minding of pigs would be to the inhabitants of the west of Ireland. The egg and poultry industry might be greatly benefited by a little knowledge. Lecturers were sought and found, and they departed to instruct, and capons were imported from Surrey to improve the strains, and there was great lamentation at the end of the hatching season. Some wonderful letters reached the Department, strangely worded letters from which I have room for only one sentence: Sorra cock was among the cocks you sent us. Pecuchet rang the bell, but the poultry expert was out at the time, and a deputation was waiting in the ante-room. After listening to all the evidence on the subject of cooking he agreed that the culinary utensils at the disposal of the peasant were antiquated and it was arranged that ladies should be sent out; one

arrived at Ballinrobe, and the peasants learnt from her how to make meringues. But meringues were a little beyond the reach of the peasants' bill of fare, and after a long correspondence with the Department the lecturers were ordered to substitute *macaroni au gratin*, and I remember a girl coming back from Ballinrobe bringing the dish with her, and her enthusiasm about it was the same as Bouvard's and Pecuchet's over the melon, and its success was the same as the melon's; one of the family spat it into the grate, another spat it out of the window. The Department had forgotten that Catholics do not like cheese.

Undeterred by such incidents as these, the wheels of the Department grind on and on, reproducing all the events of Flaubert's book in every detail, but sooner or later Nature outstrips the human imagination, and Flaubert would have thrown up his arms in significant gesture if he were alive to hear the story of how Bouvard and Pecuchet decided one day to improve the breed of asses in Ireland.

The ass is an animal much used in Ireland by the peasant, Bouvard began; Pecuchet acquiesced, and during the course of the evening it was agreed that it would be a great advantage to the country if the Irish ass were improved. Books on the subject of the ass were sent for to London, and it was discovered that the Spanish asses were the finest of all, and Bouvard said to Pecuchet: We must import sires. Pecuchet hesitated, and with his usual instinct for compromise suggested Shetland ponies. Bouvard was of opinion that the Shetland pony was too small for the friendly ass, but Pecuchet said that there were in Kerry asses of a sufficient size, and a breed of small mules would be of great use in the mountainy districts. Bouvard pointed out that mules were sterile; Pecuchet referred Bouvard to *The Reminiscences of a Veterinary Surgeon*; and he read in this book that mules had been seen with foals. There was no case, however, of these foals having bred in their turn, so the mule must be said to be sterile in the second generation for certain. The mule is, moreover, a

vicious animal, and Bouvard passed the book back to Pecuchet, and for one reason or another it was decided that the Department would be well advised to leave the mule alone and direct all its attention to the improvement of the ass.

What do you think, Pecuchet, of the Scotch ass?

Our importations from Scotland have been considerable lately.

You would like something Continental, Pecuchet. The Spanish ass, you will see, is highly recommended; but the sires are expensive; two hundred pounds are paid for the tall ass standing over fourteen hands high, and able to cover a sixteen-hands mare; and we should have to import at least fifty sires to affect visibly the Irish strain. You see that would be ten thousand pounds, and we could hardly risk so large an outlay. You will notice that the Egyptian ass is described as being smaller than the Spanish, altogether a lighter animal, and we could buy Egyptian sires for a hundred apiece; they run from seventy-five to a hundred pounds. We might get them cheaper still by taking a large number.

Pecuchet was in favour of a small commission that would take evidence regarding not only the Egyptian, but the Barbary and the Arabian ass, but this commission Bouvard pointed out would be a delay and an expense, and an order was sent to Alexandria to purchase asses. The Department of Agriculture in Ireland was anxious to buy sire asses, sure foal-getters, and the selection was confided to—whom? The archives of the Department would have to be searched for the name of the agent, a useless labour, for no blame attaches to him; his selection was approved by everybody, and the herd was much admired as it trotted and cantered through the morning sunlight on the way to the docks, beautiful little animals, alert as flies, shaking their ears and whisking their long, well-furnished tails, a sight to behold, as docile as they were beautiful, until they reached the gangway. But as soon as they were asked to step on board every one was equally determined to stay in his own country, and much pressure had

to be used, and some accidents happened; but human energy prevailed; the asses were all shipped in the end, and it was thought that no untoward incident could happen, so admirable were the arrangements for their reception. Every ass had a stall to himself, and to make sure that there could be no mutual biting and kicking each one was barred in his stall. And it was this very bar that proved the undoing of Bouvard and Pecuchet's great experiment. The temper of the asses had already been tried, and they were now roused to such a stubbornness by the bar that they preferred to die rather than to stale without stretching themselves, and when the steamer put into Malta only seven were able to proceed down the gangway. The telegram that brought the news of the loss of ten asses set Bouvard and Pecuchet pondering.

Sea-sickness, I suppose, said Pecuchet.

It may have been home-sickness, Bouvard replied. Be that as it may, the seven must be landed at Marseilles, and a telegram with these instructions was sent to Malta. It reached there in time, but the boat was delayed by the breaking of a screw, and the grooms, unsuspicious of the reluctance of the ass to stale, again dropped the bars on their hind quarters, with the result that one after another those grand asses burst their bladders, only one arriving at Marseilles, a forlorn and decrepit scarecrow ass that would not as much as look at the pretty white and black and brown asses that had come up from Kerry. He chased them with bared teeth out of his field. Pecuchet thought that a chestnut ass might tempt him, but the colour is rare among asses, and after a long search the task of finding one was given up as hopeless, the expert declaring that it was doubtful if even a chestnut ass would revive any of the fervour of old Nile in him: a gaunt, taciturn, solitary animal, that moved away from human and ass kind, a vicious unkempt brute that had once turned on Pecuchet; but he had sat on the fence in time; a silent animal by day, and noisy at midnight, when Bouvard sat considering his book for Ireland On the table by his side lay

the *Different Methods of Famous Authors*, and learning from it that Byron wrote late at night and drank soda-water, Bouvard determined that he, too, would sit up late and drink soda-water, but strange to relate, though his health declined, his book did not progress. His mind was teeming with ideas, but he found it very difficult to disentangle them, and adopted a new method of work. Balzac used to go to sleep early in the evening, and wake up at twelve and write all night and all day, drinking black coffee, but a very few days proved to Bouvard that his health was not equal to the strain, and he resolved to adopt another method. It was also stated in the *Different Methods of Great Authors* that Dumas was often glad to call in a collaborator, and this seemed an excellent idea, for what concerned Bouvard were not his rhythms, but his ideas. Others could put his ideas into rhythms, and the help of all kinds of people was evoked. We used to hear a great deal about Bond, a German economist, and Coyne, a gentleman engaged in the Department, was entrusted with the task of gathering statistics. Memoranda of all kinds were piled up; a commission sent to Denmark to report on the working of Danish dairies came back with the information that the dairies in Denmark were kept remarkably clean. The Commission was accompanied by a priest, and he returned much shocked, as well he might be, for he had found no organised religion whatever in Denmark. One day a chapter was sent round and everybody was asked to mark what he thought should be omitted and to add what he thought should be included. Dear Edward did not think that Bouvard had gone far enough in his praise of the Gaelic, and Pecuchet, whom we met going out to luncheon, declined to give any opinion on the subject of Bouvard's book.

I will not speak on the subject. (Then, I said to myself, there is a subject on which Pecuchet is not willing to advise, and with interest heightening I listened to Pecuchet.) I have told Bouvard, he said, that he cannot be at once the saviour and the critic of Irish society. If you must write a book, Bouvard,

I have said, write what your own eyes have seen and your ears have heard. It would be better if he didn't write the book at all, he added, but if he must write one let him write a book out of himself. But if he persists in his philosophy he will harm the Department. Pecuchet threw up his arms, and I said to Edward: There is a certain good fellowship in Pecuchet; he would save his old pal from his vanity, the vanity of a book which he hopes will prove him to be far-seeing—*i.e.* the deep thinker, the brooding sage of Foxrock. And so long as breath remains in my body I will avouch that Pecuchet was firm in his determination not to have anything to do with Bouvard's book. He threw up his hands when I came to him with the news that Bouvard had tired of coffee and unseemly hours, and had sent his manuscript to Rolleston, who had turned up his shirt-sleeves and thrown it into a tub, and had sent it home carefully starched and ironed. The book got a good many reviews—the Fool's Hour it was, for the Catholic Celt let a great screech out of him and demanded that the redeemer should be put in the pillory.

My friend, John Redmond, will set up a Nationalist candidate against him for South Dublin; he will be beaten at the polls, wailed Pecuchet. And very soon after the defeat predicted by Pecuchet the Nationalist members began to remind the Government that Bouvard remained at the head of the Department, though it had always been understood that the Vice-President of the Department should be a member of the House of Commons. The Nationalists yelped singly and in concert, and so loud grew the pack that Pecuchet could restrain Bouvard no longer, and he went down to Galway to try his luck. A nice kind of luck he'll meet there, Pecuchet said, and when Bouvard returned from Galway crestfallen, Pecuchet determined to speak out. He was not unmindful of past favours, but the kindest thing he could do would be to remind Bouvard that his clinging to office was undignified.

Not only undignified, he said to me one day, but a very selfish course which I never should have suspected. Our

common child is the Department, he muttered savagely in his beard as we leaned over Baggot Street Bridge, and as the boat rose up in the lock he added: And he has no thought for it, only for himself. The words, an unworthy parent, rose up in my mind, but I repressed them, and applied myself to encouraging Pecuchet to unfold his soul to me.

So long as the Department, he said, is represented in Parliament it takes its place with the Admiralty, the Foreign Office, and the other Departments of State, but unrepresented in Parliament it sinks at once——

I understand. It sinks to the level of the Board of Charitable Bequests, to the Intermediate Board, or to any of the other Irish boards on which it was your wont to pour your wrath when you were a Nationalist and a Plan of Campaigner.

Our joint efforts created the Department, and if he were to retire now like a man instead of clinging on and embarrassing the Government—— So he is embarrassing the Government, I interjected. But without noticing my interruption Pecuchet continued: If he were to retire, I say, now, like a man, the Liberal Government, the Conservative Government, any Government worthy of its name, would seize the first opportunity to pick Bouvard out as a distinguished Irishman, who, irrespective of party or of creed, should be allowed to serve his country. It seemed rather shabby of Pecuchet to round like this on his old pal, but not feeling sure that I should act any better in like circumstances, I said: The Government asked Bouvard to stay on, and it was to oblige the Government—— But the Government did not promise to keep him on indefinitely; if it did, the Department, as you have yourself admitted, would sink to the level of the Board of Charitable Bequests. He should resign, and not wait to be kicked out.

But he is engaged on a pamphlet on the economic man and the uneconomic holding, and the uneconomic man and the economic holding, and is convinced that his work should be published during his Presidency. He sits up till

four in the morning. He has reverted to the Balzac method.

Why doesn't he send for Rolleston? If not for Rolleston, why not Hanson? If not Hanson, why not Father Finlay? If not Father Finlay, why not Bond?

Bond is in Munich, I answered.

Weeks and months went by, and we were never sure that the morrow would not see Bouvard flung out of Merrion Street; he did not behave with much dignity during these months, complaining on every occasion and to everybody he met that the Government was treating him very badly, and darkly hinting that Roosevelt had asked him to go to America, and apply his system to the United States; and that if the Government were to go much further he might be induced to accept Roosevelt's offer. But the Roosevelt intrigue, though it found much support in *The Homestead*, failed to impress anybody, and suddenly it began to be rumoured that Bouvard was locking himself in, and we were disappointed when about two o'clock the newsboys were shouting: Resignation of Misther Bouvard, and we all began to wonder who would take his place in Merrion Street, a beautiful street that had been bought up by the Department, and was about to be pulled down to make way for public offices, and mayhap the destruction of Merrion Street was Bouvard's real claim to immortality.

In Flaubert's book Bouvard and Pecuchet become copying clerks again, but Nature was not satisfied with this end. She divided our Bouvard from our Pecuchet. Bouvard returned to *The Homestead* dejected, overwhelmed, downcast, believing his spirit to be irreparably broken, but he found consolation in Æ's hope-inspiring eyes, in Anderson's manliness and courage, fortitude and perseverance, and the prodigal was led to a chair.

Far happier, said Anderson, than the miserable Pecuchet, who never will get free from the toothed wheel of the great State machine that has caught him up; round and round he will go like a rabbit in the wheel of a bicycle.

Æ looked at Anderson, who had never used an image before, and he took up the strain.

You have come back, he said, to a particular and a definite purpose, to individual effort, to economics. Bouvard raised his eyes.

We have not been idle, Anderson said, progress has been made; and he picked up a map from the table and pointed to five-and-twenty more creameries.

The co-operative movement, Æ said, has continued; the farmers are with us.

That is good, said Bouvard.

Whereas with all its thousands the Department is effecting nothing. A cloud came into Bouvard's face, for he hoped one day to return to the Department, and seeing through that cloud Æ said: No, Bouvard, no, never hope to return again to that dreadful place where all is vain tumult and salary.

I hear, said Anderson, that Pecuchet is making arrangements to bring the School of Art under the management of the Department; he believes that by co-ordination——

I have heard nothing else but co-ordination since I left you; it has been dinned into my ears night, noon, and morning, how one must delegate all detail to subordinates, and then, how by the powers of co-ordination——

Yes, Anderson added, the man who is to take your place comes with a system of the reafforestation of Ireland, and Pecuchet agrees with him that by compromise——

The last we heard of Pecuchet, Æ said, was from George Moore, who met him at the Continental Hotel in Paris one bright May morning, and Pecuchet took him for a drive, telling him that he had an appointment with the Minister of Agriculture. The appointment, however, was missed that morning, or perhaps it was delegated to the following morning; be that as it may, George Moore describes how they went for a drive together, stopping at all the book-shops, Pecuchet springing out and coming back with parcels of books all relating to horse-breeding.

He has spoken to me about the Normandy sires, said Bouvard.

George Moore said he was after Normandy sires, and went to Chantilly to view them next day.

And it seemed from Bouvard's face that he could hear the braying of the vicious scarecrow ass that awaited him on his return to Foxrock.

X

I CANNOT think that any two men ever bore names more appropriate to their characters than Bouvard and Pecuchet, not even Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Are not the vanity and kindliness and stupidity of Bouvard set forth in the two heavy syllables? And do not the three little snappy syllables represent with equal clearness Pecuchet's narrow intellect . . . and cunning on occasions? Again, the dissyllable Bouvard evokes indistinct outlines, pale, perplexed eyes, and a vague and somewhat neglected appearance, whereas we naturally associate Pecuchet with a neat necktie, a pointed beard, and catchwords rather than ideas. Bouvard has tried to think out one or two questions, but Pecuchet was content from his early youth with words. He began with Nationalism, and when he met Bouvard he picked up Co-operation—the word; and when he got into the Department he discovered Delegation; and Heaven only knows how the word Co-ordination got into his head; but it stuck there, and he could not get it out of his talk, bothering us all with it. But nothing lasts for ever, and when he wearied of Co-ordination he happened to meet the word Compromise; and this word must have been a great event in his life, for it revealed to him the Pecuchet of his dreams, the statesman which he always believed to be latent in him, and which more fortunate circumstances would have realised. It was a great treat to hear him on the subject of statesmanship the day that Sir

Anthony MacDonnell found himself forced to resign. I led him round Merrion Square and Fitzwilliam Square, over many bridges, through Herbert Street, round again, and on again; and on leaving him I should have rushed to the scrivener's, but could not resist the temptation to run up the steps of Plunkett House to tell Æ all about it, regretting all the while that my weakness would cost me many admirable pages.

I shall never be able to impr‹ ›ise it all again. My memory is wonderful, I admit, but Pecuchet's slumberous phrases, tall, bent weeds, and matted grasses, with the snapping of an occasional aphorism, a dead branch, should be dictated at once and to the nearest scrivener. I am paying dearly for the pleasure of your company.

I can see you, Æ answered, his imagination enabling him to see us in our walk, and his wit putting just the right words into his mouth—I can see you stopping at the pavement's edge asking Pecuchet to repeat one of the dead branch aphorisms; I can see you hanging on his words with a sort of literary affection; and I could listen to you for a good deal longer, but I am due to-night at the Hermetic Society, and must get home. Won't you walk a little way with me?

The proposal that we should walk a little way together reminded me that the old bicycle that had carried Bouvard's ideas all over Ireland so valiantly was now enjoying a well-earned rest in some outhouse or garden shed. Æ would not like to sell it for scrap-iron or to buy another; or it may be that he thinks bicycle riding unsuited to a fat man. He has fattened. A great roll of flesh rises to his ears, and his interests have gone so much into practical things that we think the Æ of other days is dead. We are mistaken, the Æ of our deepest affection is not dead, but sleeping; an unexpected word tells us that he has not changed at all. Relieve him, we say to ourselves, of his work at *The Homestead*, loose him among the mountains, and in a few weeks he will be hearing the fairy bells again. And happy at heart, though sorry to part with him, I returned home to a

lonely meal, hoping to find courage about eight to do some reading.

A lecture was stirring in me at that time—a lecture showing that it is impossible to form any idea of the author of the plays. We can see Virgil, I said to myself, Dante, and Balzac, but Shakespeare is an abstraction, and as invisible as Jehovah. We know that somebody must have written the plays; but of one thing only are we sure—that Sidney Lee is always wrong. But I will think no more, I will read. I took down the dreaded volume, and a smile began to trickle round my lips as a picture of the dusty room at the end of many dusty corridors rose up before me, with Æ sitting at a small table teaching that there is an essential oneness in all the different revelations that Eternity has vouchsafed to mankind.

I returned to my chair, and, falling into it, listened, hearing his voice getting calmer every minute, solemn and awe-inspiring when he commended toleration to the Hermetics. You need not be, he said, too disdainful of the essential worshippers of Iacchus-Iesus, better known in Dublin under the name of Christ. . . . He, too, was a God. There were moments when it seemed to me that I could hear his voice refuting Colum, who had ventured to remind him of Diocletian. It was not for its Christianity that the ancient creed had persecuted the new, but for its intolerance and profanity.

There never was anybody like him, I said, and my thoughts melted into a long meditation, from which I awoke, saying: His conversion, or whatever it was, gave him such an iron grip on himself that, when Indian mysticism flourished in No. 3, Upper Ely Place, he submitted his genius to the directors of the movement, asking them if they would prefer his contributions to the *Theosophical Review* in verse or in prose. The directors answered: In verse, and Æ wrote *Homeward Songs*. But even these would not have strayed beyond the pages of the review if his friend, Weekes, had not insisted that the further publication of these poems would bring comfort

and peace to many, and it appears that these poems consoled the beautiful Duchess of Leinster in her passing as no other poems could have done. Æ could have been a painter if he had wished it; but a man's whole life is seldom long enough for him to acquire the craft of the painter; and, setting life above craftsmanship, he had denied himself the touch that separates the artist from the amateur, and he had done well. Accomplishment estranges from the comprehension of the many, and for the first time in the world's history we get a man stopped midway by a scruple of conscience or love of his kindred—which? If he had devoted all his days to art, his Thursday evenings at the Hermetic Society would have had to be abandoned, and the editing of *The Homestead* too. He could not be a painter and write eight or nine columns of notes and a couple of articles on Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday. A man must have a terrible hold on himself to pursue the routine of *The Homestead* week after week without hope of reward, and it is this uncanny hold that he has on himself that makes him seem different from other men, for though in many ways more human than any of us, he wears the air of one that has lived before and will live again. How shall I word it? A demonic air, using the word in the Goethian sense, a Lohengrin come to fight the battle of others. One day he announced to us that he was going to publish the verses of his disciples, with a preface by himself, and we muttered among ourselves: Our beloved Æ is going to stumble. But the volume was received by the English press as a complete vindication of Celtic genius. Contrairy John answered all the effusive articles that appeared with one sentence: The English have so completely lost all standard of poetic excellence that any one can impose upon them. A very materialistic explanation which we were loath to accept, preferring to attribute the success of the volume to the demonic power that Æ inherits from the great theosophical days when he sat up in bed with his legs tucked under his nightshirt.

He was offered some hundreds of pounds by Lord Dunsany to found a review, but he had not time to edit it, and proposed the task to John Eglinton. Contrairy John wanted to see life steadily, and to see it whole; and Yeats came along with a sneer, and said: I hear, Lord Dunsany, that you are going to supply groundsel for Æ's canaries. The sneer brought the project to naught, and Yeats went away laughing, putting the south of Ireland above the north and the east and the west, saying that Munster was always Ireland's literary portion. The first harpers of Ireland and the first story-tellers were Munstermen, and his own writers came to him from Munster. He had gotten nothing from Dublin. Murray and Ray and Robinson had all begun by writing for the *Cork Examiner* and the *Constitutional*. And Æ may search the columns of *Sinn Fein* for ever and ever without finding, I said, a blackbird or thrush, skylark or nightingale

The portentous critic giggled a little in his stride down the incline of Rathmines Avenue, and was moved to change the conversation from *Sinn Fein*, that journal having spoken of him disrespectfully since he had accepted a pension from the English Government. Griffith, the editor of *Sinn Fein*, or Ourselves Alone, had butted him severely in several paragraphs —butted him is the word, for in appearance and mentality Griffith may be compared to a ram. He butts against England every week with admirable perseverance, and while he butts, he allows all the poets of Rathmines to carol.

A pretty banner, I said as we crossed the bridge, for *Sinn Fein* would be a tree full of small singing birds carolling sonnets and rondeaux, ballades and villanelles, with a butting-ram underneath, and this for device: Believe that England doesn't exist, and it won't.

Yes, there is an element of Christian Science in our friend Griffith, Yeats answered, and we crossed the bridge.

You don't think that Æ will ever discover any one in *Sinn Fein* comparable to Synge?

Yeats threw up his hands.

It would be better, he said, if all his little folk went back to their desks.

When this remark was repeated to Æ, he said: Colum was earning seventy-eight pounds a year when he was at his desk at the Railway Clearing House, and now he is earning four or five pounds a week. So Willie says that I shall never find anything that will compare with Synge. Well, we shall see.

And every Thursday evening the columns of *Sinn Fein* were searched, and every lilt considered, and every accent noted; but the days and the weeks went by without a new peep-o-peep, sweet, sweet, until the day that James Stephens began to trill; and recognising at once a new songster, Æ put on his hat and went away with his cage, discovering him in a lawyer's office. A great head and two soft brown eyes looked at him over a typewriter, and an alert and intelligent voice asked him whom he wanted to see. Æ said that he was looking for James Stephens, a poet, and the typist answered: I am he.

And next Sunday evening he was admitted to the circle, and we were impressed by his wit and whimsicality of mind, but we thought Æ exaggerated the talents of the young man. True that all his discoveries had come to something, but it was clear to us that he was anxious to put this new man alongside of Synge, and this we could not consent to do. He was a little distressed at our apathy, our unwillingness, our short-sightedness, for he was certain that James Stephens was a new note in Irish poetry. Our visions were not as clear as his. I was conscious of little more than harsh versification, and crude courage in the choice of subjects. Contrairy John was confused and round about, and at the end of many an argument found himself defending the very principles that he had started out to controvert. It was clear, however, that he did not think more of James Stephens than we ourselves. Yeats was the blindest of us all, and it was with ill grace that he consented to hear Æ read the poems, giving his opinion

casually; and when Æ spoke of the advantage the publication of a volume would be to Stephens, he answered: For me, the aesthetical question; for you, my dear friend, the philanthropic. Æ was hurt, but not discouraged; and to interest us he told us stories from the life of the new poet, who was a truer vagrant than ever Synge had been. Synge had fifty pounds a year; but Stephens, a poor boy without education or a penny, had wandered all over Ireland, and would have lost his life in Belfast from hunger had it not been for a charitable apple-woman. Æ was delighted at the thought of the material that his pet would have to draw upon later on when he turned from verse to prose, for Æ divined that this would be so.

James Stephens has enough poetry in him, he said to me, to be a great prose-writer.

But when he left the apple-woman? I answered, always curious.

Æ could not tell me how Stephens had picked up his education, or had learnt typewriting and shorthand and got employment in a lawyer's office at five-and-twenty shillings a week—well enough for a girl who has a home, but a bare sufficiency for a man whose head is full of dreams and who has a wife and child to support. His life must have been very hard to bear, without the solitude of a room in which to write his poems or intellectual comradeship, until he met Æ, a friend always ready to listen to him, to be enthusiastic about his literary projects. What a door was opened to him when he met Æ! Of what help Æ was to him in his first prose composition (no one can help another with poetry) none knows but Stephens himself; Æ forgets what he gives, but it is difficult for me to believe that Stephens did not benefit enormously, as much as I did myself. How much that was I cannot tell, for Æ was always helping me directly or indirectly. Shall I ever forget the day when, after three weeks' torture trying to write the second chapter of *Ave*, I went down to Plunkett House to see if he could help me out of my difficulty?

I am waiting for proofs, and am free for an hour. If you like we will walk round Merrion Square, and you can tell me all about it.

We turned to the east and walked along the north side, and it was opposite the National Gallery that he told me my second chapter must be in Victoria Street; and after a little argument, to which he listened very gently, he led me as a mother leads a child. I saw the error of my ways, and said: Good-bye; I see it all. Good-bye.

As well as anything I can think of, this anecdote shows how we run to our good friend in time of need, and never run in vain; but now I find myself in a difficulty out of which he will not be able to help me. He is not satisfied with his portrait, and complains that I have represented him in *Ave* and *Salve* as the blameless hero of a young girl's novel.

Why have you found no fault with me? If you wish to create human beings you must discover their faults.

Wherefore I am put to discovering a stain upon his character. I cannot accuse him of theft, and he never speaks of his love affairs; he may be a pure man, be that as it may, it is not for me to cast the first stone at him; lying and blackmail—of what use to make charges that no one will believe? If he will not sin, why should he object to my white flower in his buttonhole? And feeling that humanity was on the whole very difficult and tiresome, I fell to thinking. . . . But of what I cannot tell; I only know I was awakened suddenly by a memory of a young painter in London, one who brought imagination and wit and epigram and laughter into our midst, and when he left us we rarely failed to ponder on the unmerited good fortune of his wife, for to live with him always seemed to us an unreasonable share of human happiness. But one day I made the acquaintance of this woman whom I had only known faintly during her married life, and heard from her that her husband did not speak to her at dinner, but propped a book up against a glass and read; and after dinner sat in his chair composing, and often went up to bed forgetting

to bid her good-night. If she reproached him, he assured her there was no other woman in the world he loved as much as her; but being a man of genius his mind was away among his works. But what proof have I, she said, that he is a man of genius? Of course, if I were certain, it would be different. . . . All the same, it is a little trying, she added. And her case is the case of every woman who marries a man of genius. A trying tribe, especially at meal-times; ideas and food being apparently irreconcilable. I have often regretted that our good friend did not leave some of his ideas on the landing with his hat and coat, for it is distressing to hear a man say that he could not tell the difference between halibut and turbot when you have just apologised to him for an unaccountable mistake on the part of your cook. This painful incident once happened in Ely Place; and I reflected, duly, that if he were indifferent to my food he might show scant courtesy to the food that his wife provided—excellent I am sure it is—but a man of ideas cannot be catered for by friend or wife. I followed him in imagination all the way up the long Rathmines Road, and saw him picking a little from his plate, and then, becoming forgetful, his eyes would rove into dark corners. (His definition of ideas are formless spiritual essences, and the room in 17 Rathgar Avenue is full of them, economic, pictorial, and poetic.) I have it at last! A blemish, and one is enough for my portrait; a little irregularity of feature will satisfy my sitter; in the eyes of the world absent-mindedness is a blemish. But if it be none in his wife's eyes then there is no blemish, and I remembered that he chose her for her intelligence, and it is no mean one. She had abandoned papistry before he met her, and had written some beautiful phrases in her pages of the *Theosophical Review*; and these won his heart. A very gracious presence and personality, too distinct to seem invidious to her husband's genius, or to deem it an injustice to herself that he should be beloved by all. But in his indifference to money we may seek and find cause for complaint. It is possible that in the eyes of women who

have not succeeded in marrying men of genius he should apply his talents to increasing his income, for the common belief is that a man's life is not his exclusive possession to dispose of as pleases his good will, but a sort of family banking account on which his wife and children may draw checks. This is not Æ's view. He has often said to me, I came into the world without money or possessions, and have done very well without either. Why shouldn't my children do the same? His life is in his ideas as much as Christ's, and I will avouch that his wife has never tried to come between him and his ideas. As much cannot be said for Mary, whom Christ had to reprove for trying to dissuade him from his mission, which he did on many occasions. . . . But again I am hoeing and raking, shovelling up merits instead of picking out the small but necessary fault. If I dig deeper perhaps my search will be rewarded. He gives his wife all the money she asks for, but she does not know what money he has in the bank. Æ does not know himself, and feeling that Æ was about to be born into my text, a real man rather than an ideal one, my heart rose, and I said: It is not long ago since he told me that he had given a man who had asked him for a contribution a long screed for which he could have had thirty pounds from a certain magazine. In giving his screed for nothing he acted as all the great dispensers of ideas have done, and the many will find fault with him, for though they would like to have prophets and poets they would like them domesticated, each one bringing home to a little house in the suburbs a reel of office chit-chat to unwind for his wife's pleasure, the poet on one side of the hearth, the wife on the other, the cat between them. Jane and Minna would listen attentively, but Violet's thoughts would stray and she would find herself very soon with Cuchulain, Caolte, and Finn, and picking up from the table her beautiful book of fairy tales, I read them until I was awakened by a knocking at my front door. The servants had gone to bed. Who could this be? Æ perhaps. It was John Eglinton.

Are you sure you aren't busy? If you are, don't hesitate——

I was sitting by the fire thinking.

I am loath to disturb a thinking man; and he stopped half-way between the armchair and the door.

I assure you I had come to the end of my thinking.

On what subject?

One that you know very well—Æ. Among my portraits he is the least living, and that is a pity. He does not silhouette as Yeats does or as dear Edward Edward's round head and bluff shoulders and big thighs and long feet correspond with his blunt mind. And Yeats's solemn height and hieratic appearance authorise the literary dogmas that he pronounces every season. He is the type of the literary fop, and the most complete that has ever appeared in literature. But Æ! I wonder if we could get him into a phrase, John. After a while I said: He has the kindly mind of a shepherd, and ten years ago he was thin, lithe, active, shaggy, and I can see him leaning on his crook meditating.

That is just what I don't think he does. He talks about meditation, but his mind is much too alert. There is this resemblance, however: the shepherd knows little but the needs of his flock, and the other day, at Horace Plunkett's, I heard that Æ exhibited a surprising ignorance in an argument with some English economists. He did not know that Athenian society was founded on slavery.

I am glad to hear it, for if he knew all the things that one learns out of books I should never get him into a literary silhouette.

You admit, John said, inspiration in his painting, but you think it lacks quality; and in your study of him you will explain——

Of course, a most important point. Æ has come out of many previous existences and is going toward many others, and looks upon this life as an episode of no importance.

An interesting explanation, but the real one is——

Is what? I asked eagerly.

He is too impatient. I told him so once, but he answered indignantly that there was no more patient man than he.

I prefer my explanation, I answered.

It is the more poetic, but temperament goes deeper than belief, John replied.

Not deeper than Æ's belief in his own eternity, I said; and my answer had the effect of rolling John for a moment out of his ideas. He'll soon be back in them again, I said to myself. At the end of another long silence John told me that somebody had said that Æ was an unhappy man.

It never struck me that he was unhappy. He always seems among the happiest. And I began to wonder if John Eglinton looked upon me as a happy man.

You're happy in your work, but I don't know if you are happy in your life.

And you, John, I said, are happy in your thoughts.

Yes, he answered, and my unhappiness is caused by the fact that I get so little time for enjoying them

It was pleasant for two old cronies to sit by the fire, wondering what they had gotten out of life; and when John bade me good-bye at the door he admonished me to be very careful what I said about Æ's home life.

But he has asked me to tack him on to life, and now you think, since he has been tacked on, he won't like it.

Damn these models! I said, returning to my room. Models are calamitous, and it would perhaps be calamitous to be without them. Shakespeare, too, is a calamity. And, dismayed by the number of plays I should have to read, my thoughts turned to dear little John Eglinton, to the little shrivelled face and the round head with a great deal of back to it, to the reddish hair into which grey is coming, to the gaunt figure, and I fell to thinking how his trousers had wound round his legs as he had walked down the street. It seemed to me that I should never find anything more suitable to my talent as a narrator and as a psychologist than this dear little

man that had just left me, dry, determined, and all of a piece, valiant in his ideas and in his life, come straight down from the hard North into the soft Catholic Dublin atmosphere, which was not, however, able to rob him of any of his individuality. The Catholic atmosphere has intensified John Eglinton—boiled him down, as it were—made him a sort of Liebig extract of himself, and I seemed to realise more than ever I had done before how like he was to himself: the well-backed head and the square shoulders, and the hesitating, puzzled look that comes into his face. I had often sought a reason for that look. Now I know the cause of it: because he gets so little time for his ideas. He does not wish to write them out any more than Steer wishes to exhibit his Chelsea figures; he rearranges them and dusts them, and sits among them conscious of familiar presences, and as the years go by he seems to us to sink deeper into his armchair, and his contempt of our literary activities strengthens; he is careful to hide the fact from us lest he should wound our feelings, but it transpired the evening I ran over to the Library to tell him of Goethe's craving for information on all subjects, including even a little midwifery. So that he might continue a little dribble of ink in the morning, he said, for John never lacks a picturesque phrase, but that is neither here nor there; the sentiment it expresses is John Eglinton—a lack of faith in all things. Of late years he seems to have been drawn toward Buddhism, and goes out to a lonely cottage among the Dublin mountains in the hope that the esoteric lore of the East may allow him to look a little over the border. I shall never find a better model than John Eglinton. It seems to me that I understand him; and what a fine foil he would make to the soft and peaty Hyde, the softest of all our natural products, a Protestant that Protestantism has not been able to harden! A moment after I sat pondering on his yellow skull floating back from the temples, collecting hugely on the crown; his black eyebrows and a drooping black moustache; his laugh, shallow and a little vacant, a little mechanical; and his words and thoughts,

casual as the stage Irishman's. We would pick him out for a Catholic in a tram, and if there were a priest in the tram Hyde would be interested in him at once, and he would like nothing better than to visit Clare Island with a batch of ecclesiastics, a dozen or fifteen parish priests, not one of them weighing less than fifteen stone, and the bishop eighteen. It would be a pleasure to Hyde to drop the words Your Grace into as many sentences as possible ; whether he would kiss the bishop's ring may be doubted—being a Protestant, he could hardly do so—but he would fly for a pillow to put under His Grace's throbbing head. On Clare Island the parish priest would have prepared legs of mutton and sirloins of beef, chickens and geese, and Hyde's comment to His Grace would be : The hospitality of the Irish priest is unequalled. He will crack a bottle of champagne with any visitor. A gathering of this kind is very agreeable to the Catholic Protestant, and the Catholic bishop likes to do business with the Catholic Protestant better than with anybody else. The Catholic might stand up to him ; there are one or two, perhaps, who would venture to disagree with His Grace, but the Catholic Protestant melts like peat into fine ash before His Grace's ring. But Hyde was not always Catholic Protestant. In the old Roscommon glebe there was sufficient Protestantism in him to set him learning Irish. He has written some very beautiful poems in Irish, and it is to Hyde that we owe the jargon since become so famous, for the great discovery was his that to write beautiful English one has only to translate literally from the Irish ; his prose translations of the *Love Songs of Connaught* are as beautiful as Synge's, and it is a pity he was stopped by Father Tom Finlay, who said : Write in Irish or in English, but our review does not like mixed languages. And these words and his election to the Presidency of the Gaelic League made an end to Hyde as a man of letters. I took his measure at the banquet at the Shelbourne Hotel, his noisy demonstration in Irish and English convincing me that the potential scholar would be swallowed up in the demagogue,

for the Gaelic League must make no enemies; and that the way to success is to stand well with everybody—members of Parliament, priests, farmers, shopkeepers—and by standing well with all these people, especially with the priests, Hyde has become the archetype of the Catholic Protestant, cunning, subtle, cajoling, superficial, and affable, and these qualities have enabled him to paddle the old dug-out of the Gaelic League up from the marshes through many an old bog, lake, and river, reaching at last Portobello Bridge, where he took on board two passengers, Agnes O'Farrelly and Mary Hayden, and, having placed them in the stern, he paddled the old dug-out to the steps of the National University. He gallantly handed them up the steps, and so amazed were the three at the salaries that were offered to them that they forgot the old dug-out; and worn and broken and water-logged, it has drifted back to the original Connemara bog-hole, to sink under the brown water out of sight of the quiet evening sky, unwatched, unmourned save by dear Edward, who will weep a few tears, I am sure, when the last bubbles arise and break.

XI

THE sinking of the old dug-out will rob Edward of an evening's occupation, and the question comes, to what great national or civic end he will devote his Thursdays. On Monday evening he presides at the Piper's Club, on Tuesday he goes to the theatre, on Wednesday he attends a meeting of Sinn Fein, on Thursday he dozes through the proceedings of the Coisde Gnotha, on Friday there is choir practice in the cathedral, on Saturday he speaks severely to his disobedient choristers, tries new voices in his rooms in Lincoln Place, and plans new programmes with Vincent O'Brien, his choirmaster, chosen by him because he believes in O'Brien's talent and in his desire to give the music in accordance with tradition and Edward's own taste. On Sunday he is ever watchful in the

cathedral, sitting with his hand to his ear, noting the time and the efficiency of the singers.

I had to give way on one point, he said to me, but I think I told you already that the Archbishop stipulated that if a great composer of Church music should arise, the cathedral should not be debarred from giving his music. I don't think it will happen very often, so there was no use in opposing His Grace on this particular point. We have now eight hundred a year——

Eight hundred a year our of ten thousand!

You see, he said, the Archbishop has added ten thousand to mine, and that invested at four per cent will bring in eight hundred.

So you succeeded in persuading the Archbishop to give you ten thousand as well as to grant you the Headship! My admiration for Edward as a business man swelled.

It was a hard fight, he said, and very often the negotiations were nearly broken off, but I stuck to my guns, for of course it wasn't likely that I was going to give ten thousand without getting what I was bargaining for.

The sum of money seemed to strike a chord in my memory, and I was moved to ask him what had led him to fix on this sum, but refrained lest I should appear too inquisitive. *Something must have happened, I said, to fix this sum in his mind. It has never been less, it has never been more,* and in the beginning he didn't know how much money was necessary to found the choir. Would he have given the twenty thousand if——

It suddenly dropped upon me that he had told me in Bayreuth, in the great yawning street between the little bridge and the railway-station, that he had come out of a great conscientious crisis, and had had to go to Bishop Healy and lay the whole matter before him. What sin can he have committed? I said to myself, and, quelling my curiosity as best I could, I tried to induce him to confide in me, and after some persuasion he confessed that his mother, fearing the

Land Acts, had prevailed upon him to redistribute his grass-farms. He had told the tenants that he would reinstate them; whereas he had given them other farms equally good, but they had found fault with the lands he had put them into, and his bailiff had been fired at on the highroad to Gort. He had received coffins and crossbones; it was not, however, fear of his life or his money that had brought about the great mental breakdown, but his conscience. If he had acted wrongly, he must make reparation before his sin would be forgiven him. . . . And while I pictured him as a prey to remorse, of pallid and rueful countenance, he told me that the one thing that stood to him was his appetite. For after a night of agony he often descended his Gothic stairs forgetful of everything but the sirloin on the side-table He is always original, I said, and has discovered an unexpected connection between conscience and appetite. But notwithstanding his appetite, he had had to leave Tillyra for Cork. He had always liked the sea and its influences, and in six weeks had returned much improved in health, but still unable to smoke his churchwarden, only an occasional cigar, and that a mild one.

It may have been from too much smoking, I said; but I can't think why you wanted to send for Bishop Healy. I could have advised you better.

Nothing would have satisfied me but a bishop, he answered, with a terrified look in his eyes.

To tell you that you must keep your promise?

All these business matters are very intricate, and it is difficult to say who is right and who is wrong. One doesn't know oneself, and when one's interests are concerned one doesn't see straight.

My heart went out to him, for it is seldom that one meets anybody altogether honourable about money matters, and rarer still is he who accepts the advice that he asks for: Edward had reinstated his tenants, and I began to wonder if the ten thousand that he had spent upon his choir was

connected in some remote way with his management of the property, or with his mother's management, or with his father's. A conscience like Edward's might lead him back one hundred years, to his grandfather.

But if he had had any suspicion about this money, I should have heard it. He has been confessing himself to me for the last thirty years. . . . Now I come to think of it, he never told me how he first came to hear of Palestrina. It was when we lived in the Temple together that he began to speak to me about the Mass of Pope Marcellus; and one Christmas Eve he persuaded me to go over to Paris with him to hear it. And shall I ever forget how he sidled up to me when we came out of the church?

Now what do you think of Palestrina?

About the beauty of the music there can be no question, and as far advanced in his art as—shall we say—Botticelli?

And what about the plain-chant? You will never say again that you don't like plain-chant.

But there was no plain-chant. None was sung to-day.

Yes, the hymn. And the boy's voice—how much purer than a woman's!

He sang very beautifully, Edward. . . . You don't mean the *Adeste Fideles*?

Of course I do.

But Edward—— And we began to argue, myself convinced, in spite of the fact that he showed me the *Adeste Fideles* in his Prayer-Book among plain-chant tunes, that it could not be else than modern music. A Raphael doesn't become a Rubens because it happens to have been hung among Rubenses.

We argued about plain-chant endings till I was on the point of reminding him of the thirteenth-century window in Aix-la-Chapelle, but restrained myself for once, and admitting he had eaten too much steak, drunken too much wine, he asked me to come with him. He was taking me to the other end of Paris to buy the masses and motets of the great Italian contra-

puntalists; we walked and we walked, arriving at last at the shop. His negotiations with the music-seller began to astonish me. I had fancied he was going to buy music to the value of a pound or thirty shillings—two pounds, perhaps—but I heard: And if I add three motets by Clemens non Papa and two masses by Orlando di Lasso, that will come to how much? Five hundred francs. And if I take six more motets and six more masses by Vittoria? That will bring up the total to twelve hundred francs. I may be wrong in my figures, but he certainly bought that morning from thirty to forty pounds' worth of music; and while the bundle was being tied, Borde, the conductor, came in, and I told him that my friend Edward Martyn was about to give ten thousand pounds to found a choir in Dublin, and was buying music. Borde was, of course, very much interested in the Dublin choir, and he led me into conversation graciously, in the course of which I said:

I congratulate you, M. Borde, on your wonderful boy treble.

A cloud came into his face, and after some pressing he admitted that there was no boy in his choir.

No boy! and Mr. Martyn thinks a boy's voice much more beautiful than a woman's. It wasn't a boy, then, who sang the *Adeste Fideles*?

No . . . a woman. He added that she was fifty. I thanked him inwardly, and, feeling sorry for Edward, persuaded Borde to admit that he had taught her to sing like a boy. But if Edward had mistaken a woman's voice for a boy's he may be mistaken about plain-chant.

Mr. Martyn tells me that the *Adeste* is a plain-chant tune. Surely not.

No, he answered; it is a Portuguese tune, and it was written about one hundred years ago.

But, Edward spluttered, it is in my Prayer-Book among the plain-chant. How did it get there?

Borde could not enlighten him on that point, and I suggested that he should make application to the publisher of his

Prayer-Book and get his money back. There is nobody, I said, like him. He is more wonderful than anything in literature. I prefer him to Sancho who was untroubled with a conscience and never thought of running to the Bishop of Toledo. All the same he is not without the shrewdness of his ancestors, and got the better of Archbishop Walsh, and for the last five years Vincent O'Brien has been beating time, and will beat it till the end of his life; and he will be succeeded by others, for Edward has, by deed, saved the Italian contrapuntalists till time everlasting from competition with modern composers. He certainly has gotten the better of Walsh. And I thought of a picture-gallery in Dublin with nothing in it but Botticelli and his school, and myself declaring that all painting that had been done since had no interest for me. . . . A smile began to spread over my face, for the story that was coming into my mind seemed oh! so humorous, so like Ireland, so like Edward, that I began to tell myself again the delightful story of the unrefined ears that, weary of erudite music, had left the cathedral and sought instinctively modern tunes and women's voices, and as these were to be found in Westland Row the church was soon overflowing with a happy congregation. But in a little while the collections grew scantier. This time it couldn't be Palestrina, and all kinds of reasons were adduced. At last the truth could no longer be denied—the professional Catholics of Merrion Square had been driven out of Westland Row by the searching smells of dirty clothes, and had gone away to the University Church in Stephen's Green. So if it weren't Palestrina directly it was Palestrina indirectly, and the brows of the priests began to knit when Edward Martyn's name was mentioned. Them fal-de-dals is well enough on the Continent, in Paris, where there is no faith, was the opinion of an important ecclesiastic. But we don't want them here, murmured a second ecclesiastic. All this counterpoint may make a very pretty background for Mr. Martyn's prayers, but what about the poor people's? Good composer or bad

composer, there is no congregation in him, said a third. There's too much congregation, put in the first, but not the kind we want! The second ecclesiastic took snuff, and the group were of opinion that steps should be taken to persuade dear Edward to make good their losses. The priests in Marlborough Street sympathised with the priests of Westland Row, and told them that they were so heavily out of pocket that Mr. Martyn had agreed to do something for them. It seemed to the Westland Row priests that if Mr. Martyn were making good the losses of the priests of the pro-Cathedral, he should make good their losses. It was natural that they should think so, and to acquit himself of all responsibility Edward no doubt consulted the best theologians on the subject, and I think that they assured him that he is not responsible for indirect losses. If he were, his whole fortune would not suffice. He was, of course, very sorry if a sudden influx of poor people had caused a falling-off in the collections of Westland Row, for he knew that the priests needed the money very much to pay for the new decorations, and to help them he wrote an article in the *Independent* praising the new blue ceiling, which seemed, so he wrote, a worthy canopy for the soaring strains of Palestrina

Unfortunately rubbing salt into the wound, I said. A story that will amuse Dujardin and it will be great fun telling him in the shady garden at Fontainebleau how Edward, anxious to do something for his church, had succeeded in emptying two. All the way down the alleys he will wonder how Edward could have ever looked upon Palestrina's masses as religious music. The only music, he will say, in which religious emotion transpires is plain-chant. Huysmans says that the *Tantum Ergo* or the *Dies Irae*, one or the other, reminds him of a soul being dragged out of purgatory, and it is possible that it does; but a plain-chant tune arranged in eight-part counterpoint cannot remind one of anything very terrible. Dujardin knows that Palestrina was a priest, and he will say: That fact deceived your friend, just as the fact of

finding the *Adeste Fideles* among the plain-chant tunes deceived him. For of course I shall tell Dujardin that story too. It is too good to be missed. He is wonderful, Dujardin! I shall cry out in one of the sinuous alleys. There never was anybody like him! And I will tell him more soul-revealing anecdotes. I will say: Dujardin, listen. One evening he contended that the great duet at the end of *Siegfried* reminded him of mass by Palestrina. Dujardin will laugh, and, excited by his laughter, I will try to explain to him that what Edward sees is that Palestrina took a plain-chant tune and gave fragments of it to the different voices, and in his mind these become confused with the motives of *The Ring*. You see, Dujardin, the essential always escapes him—the intention of the writer is hidden from him. I am beginning to understand your friend. He has, let us suppose, a musical ear that allows him to take pleasure in the music; but a musical ear will not help him to follow Wagner's idea—how, in a transport of sexual emotion, a young man and a young woman on a mountain-side awaken to the beauty of the life of the world. Dujardin's appreciations will provoke me, and I will say: Dujardin, you shouldn't be so appreciative. If I were telling you of a play I had written, it would be delightful to watch my idea dawning upon your consciousness; but I am telling you of a real man, and one that I shall never be able to get into literature. He will answer: We invent nothing; we can but perceive. And then, exhilarated, carried beyond myself, I will say: Dujardin, I will tell you something still more wonderful than the last *gaffe*. *Il gaffe dans les Quat'z Arts*. He admires Ibsen, but you'd never guess the reason why—because he is very like Racine; both of them, he says, are classical writers. And do you know how he arrived at that point? Because nobody is killed on the stage in Racine or in Ibsen. He does not see that the intention of Racine is to represent men and women out of time and out of space, unconditioned by environment, and that the very first principle of Ibsen's art is the relation of his characters to their environ-

ment. In many passages he merely dramatises Darwin. There never was anybody so interesting as dear Edward, and there never will be anybody like him in literature . . . I will explain why presently, but I must first tell you another anecdote. I went to see him one night, and he told me that the theme of the play he was writing was a man who had married a woman because he had lost faith in himself; the man did not know, however, that the woman had married him for the same reason, and the two of them were thinking—I have forgotten what they were thinking, but I remember Edward saying: I should like to suggest hopelessness. I urged many phrases, but he said: It isn't a phrase I want, but an actual thing. I was thinking of a broken anchor—that surely is a symbol of hopelessness. Yes, I said, no doubt, but how are you going to get a broken anchor into a drawing-room? I don't write about *drawing-rooms*. Well, *living-rooms*. It isn't likely that they would buy a broken anchor and put it up by the coal-scuttle.
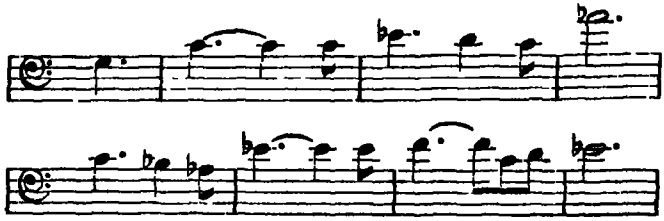
There's that against it, he answered. If you could suggest anything better—— What do you think of a library in which there is nothing but unacted plays? The characters could say, when there was nothing for them to do on the stage, that they were going to the library to read, and the library would have the advantage of reminding everybody of the garret in the *Wild Duck*. A very cruel answer, my friend, Dujardin will say, and I will tell him that I can't help seeing in Edward something beyond Shakespeare or Balzac. Now, tell me, which of these anecdotes I have told you is the most humorous? He will not answer my question, but a certain thoughtfulness will begin to settle in his face, and he will say: Everything with him is accidental, and when his memory fails him he falls into another mistake, and he amuses you because it is impossible for you to anticipate his next mistake. You know there is going to be one; there must be one, for he sees things separately rather than relatively. I am beginning to understand your friend.

You are, you are; you are doing splendidly. But you haven't told me, Dujardin, which anecdote you prefer. Stay, there is another one. Perhaps this one will help you to a still better understanding. When he brought *The Heather Field* and Yeats's play *The Countess Cathleen* to Dublin for performance, a great trouble of conscience awakened suddenly in him, and a few days before the performance he went to a theologian to ask him if *The Countess Cathleen* were a heretical work, and, if it were would Almighty God hold him responsible for the performance? But he couldn't withdraw Yeats's play without withdrawing his own, and it appears that he breathed a sigh of relief when a common friend referred the whole matter to two other theologians, and as these gave their consent Edward allowed the plays to go on; but Cardinal Logue intervened, and wrote a letter to the papers to say that the play seemed to him unfit for Catholic ears, and Edward would have withdrawn the plays if the Cardinal hadn't admitted in his letter that he had judged the play by certain extracts only.

He wishes to act rightly, but has little faith in himself; and what makes him so amusing is that he needs advice in aesthetics as well as in morals. We are, I said, Dujardin, at the roots of conscience. And I began to ponder the question what would happen to Edward if we lived in a world in which aesthetics ruled: I should be where Bishop Healy is, and he would be a thin, small voice crying in the wilderness—an amusing subject of meditation, from which I awoke suddenly.

I wonder how Dujardin is getting on with his Biblical studies? Last year he was calling into question the authorship of the Romans—a most eccentric view; and, remembering how weakly I had answered him, I took the Bible from the table and began to read the Epistle with a view to furnishing myself with arguments wherewith to confute him. My Bible opened at the ninth chapter, and I said: Why, here is the authority for the Countess Cathleen's sacrifice which

Edward's theologian deemed untheological. It will be great fun to poke Edward up with St. Paul, and on my way to Lincoln Place I thought how I might lead the conversation to *The Countess Cathleen.*



A few minutes afterwards a light appeared on the staircase and the door slowly opened.

Come in, Siegfried, though you were off the key.

Well, my dear friend, it is a difficult matter to whistle above two trams passing simultaneously and six people jabbering round a public-house, to say nothing of a jarvey or two, and you perhaps dozing in your armchair, as your habit often is You won't open to anything else except a motive from *The Ring*; and I stumbled up the stairs in front of Edward, who followed with a candle.

Wait a moment; let me go first and I'll turn up the gas.

You aren't sitting in the dark, are you?

No, but I read better by candle-light, and he blew out the candles in the tin candelabrum that he had made for himself. He is original even in his candelabrum; no one before him had ever thought of a candelabrum in tin, and I fell to admiring his appearance more carefully than perhaps I had ever done before, so monumental did he seem lying on the little sofa sheltered from draughts by a screen, a shawl about his shoulders. His churchwarden was drawing famously, and I noticed his great square hands with strong fingers and square nails pared closely away, and as heretofore I admired the curve of the great belly, the thickness of the thighs, the length and breadth and the width of his foot hanging over the edge of the sofa, the apoplectic neck falling into great rolls of

flesh, the humid eyes, the skull covered with short stubbly hair. I looked round the rooms and they seemed part of himself: the old green wallpaper on which he pins reproductions of the Italian masters. And I longed to peep once more into the bare bedroom into which he goes to fetch bottles of Apollinaris. Always original! Is there another man in this world whose income is two thousand a year, and who sleeps in a bare bedroom, without dressing-room, or bathroom, or servant in the house to brush his clothes, and who has to go to the baker's for his breakfast?

We had been talking for some time of the Gaelic League, and from Hyde it was easy to pass to Yeats and his plays.

His best play is *The Countess Cathleen.*

The Countess Cathleen is only a sketch.

But what I never could understand, Edward, was why you and the Cardinal could have had any doubts as to the orthodoxy of *The Countess Cathleen.*

What, a woman that sells her own soul in order to save the souls of others!

I suppose your theologian objected——

Of course he objected.

He cannot have read St. Paul.

What do you mean?

He can't have read St. Paul, or else he is prepared to throw over St. Paul.

Mon ami Moore, mon ami Moore.

The supernatural idealism of a man who would sell his soul to save the souls of others fills me with awe.

But it wasn't a man; it was the Countess Cathleen, and women are never idealists.

Not the saints?

His face grew solemn at once.

If you give me the Epistles I will read the passage to you. And it was great fun to go to the bookshelves and read: I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness

and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

Edward's face grew more and more solemn, and I wondered of what he was thinking.

Paul is a very difficult and a very obscure writer, and I think the Church is quite right not to encourage the reading of the Epistles, especially without comments.

Then you do think there is something in the passage I have read?

After looking down his dignified nose for a long time, he said:

Of course, the Church has an explanation. All the same, it's very odd that St. Paul should have said such a thing—very odd.

There is no doubt that I owe a great deal of my happiness to Edward; all my life long he has been exquisite entertainment. And I fell to thinking that Nature was very cruel to have led me, like Moses, within sight of the Promised Land. A story would be necessary to bring Edward into literature, and it would be impossible to devise an action of which he should be a part. The sex of a woman is odious to him, and a man with two thousand a year does not rob nor steal, and he is so uninterested in his fellow-men that he has never an ill word to say about anybody. John Eglinton is a little thing; Æ is a soul that few will understand; but Edward is universal—more universal than Yeats, than myself, than any of us, but for lack of a story I shall not be able to give him the immortality in literature which he seeks in sacraments. Shakespeare always took his stories from some other people. Turgenev's portrait of him would be thin, poor, and evasive, and Balzac would give us the portrait of a mere fool. And Edward is not a fool. As I understand him he is a temperament without a rudder; all he has to rely upon is his memory, which isn't a very good one, and so he tumbles from one mistake into another. My God! it is a terrible thing to happen to one, to understand a man better than he under-

stands himself, and to be powerless to help him. If I had been able to undo his faith I should have raised him to the level of Sir Horace Plunkett, but he resisted me ; and perhaps he did well, for he came into the world seeing things separately rather than relatively, and had to be a Catholic. He is a born Catholic, and I remembered one of his confessions—a partial confession, but a confession : If you had been brought up as strictly as I have been—— I don't think he ever finished the sentence ; he often leaves sentences unfinished, as if he fears to think things out. The end of the sentence should run : You would not dare to think independently. He thinks that his severe bringing-up has robbed him of something. But the prisoner ends by liking his prison-house, and on another occasion he said : If it hadn't been for the Church, I don't know what would have happened to me.

My thoughts stopped, and when I awoke I was thinking of Hughes. Perhaps the link between Hughes and Edward was Loughrea Cathedral. He had shown me a photograph of some saints modelled by Hughes. Hughes is away in Paris, I said, modelling saints for Loughrea Cathedral. The last time I saw him was at Walter Osborne's funeral, and Walter's death set me thinking of the woman I had lost, and little by little all she had told me about herself floated up in my mind like something that I had read. I had never seen her father nor the Putney villa in which she had been brought up, but she had made me familiar with both through her pleasant mode of conversation, which was never to describe anything, but just to talk about things, dropping phrases here and there, and the phrases she dropped were so well chosen that the comfort of the villa, its pompous meals and numerous servants, its gardens and greenhouses, with stables and coach-house just behind, are as well known to me as the house that I am living in, better known in a way, for I see it through the eyes of the imagination . . . clearer eyes than the physical eyes.

It does not seem to me that any one was ever more conscious

of whence she had come and of what she had been; she seemed to be able to see herself as a child again, and to describe her childhood with her brother (they were nearly the same age) in the villa and in the villa's garden. I seemed to see them always as two rather staid children who were being constantly dressed by diligent nurses and taken out for long drives in the family carriage. They did not like these drives and used to hide in the garden; but their governess was sent to fetch them, and they were brought back. Her father did not like to have the horses kept waiting, and one day as Stella stood with him in the passage, she saw her mother come out of her bedroom beautifully dressed. Her father whispered something in his wife's ear, and he followed her into her bedroom. Stella remembered how the door closed behind them. In my telling, the incident seems to lose some of its point, but in Stella's relation it seemed to put her father and his wife before me and so clearly that I could not help asking her what answer her father would make were she to tell him that she had a lover. A smile hovered in her grave face. He would look embarrassed, she said, and wonder why I should have told him such a thing, and then I think he would go to the greenhouse, and when he returned he would talk to me about something quite different. I don't think that Stella ever told me about the people that came to their house, but people must have come to it, and as an example of how a few words can convey an environment I will quote her: I always wanted to talk about Rossetti, she said, and these seven words seem to me to tell better than any description the life of a girl living with a formal father in a Putney villa, longing for something, not knowing exactly what, and anxious to get away from home. . . . I think she told me she was eighteen or nineteen and had started painting before she met Florence at the house of one of her father's friends; a somewhat sore point this meeting was, for Florence was looked upon by Stella's father as something of a Bohemian. She was a painter, and knew all the Art classes and the fees

that had to be paid, and led Stella into the world of studios and models and girl friends. She knew how to find studios and could plan out a journey abroad. Stella's imagination was captured, and even if her father had tried to offer opposition to her leaving home he could not have prevented her, for she was an heiress (her mother was dead and had left her a considerable income); but he did not try, and the two girls set up house together in Chelsea; they travelled in Italy and Spain; they had a cottage in the country; they painted pictures and exhibited their pictures in the same exhibitions; they gave dances in their studios and were attracted by this young man and the other; but Stella did not give herself to any one, because, as she admitted to me, she was afraid that a lover would interrupt the devotion which she intended to give to Art. But life is forever casting itself into new shapes and forms, and no sooner had she begun to express herself in Art than she met me. I was about to go to Ireland to preach a new gospel, and must have seemed a very impulsive and fantastic person to her, but were not impulsiveness and fantasy just the qualities that would appeal to her? And were not gravity and good sense the qualities that would appeal to me, determined as I was then to indulge myself in a little madness?

I could not have chosen a saner companion than Stella; my instinct had led me to her; but because one man's instinct is a little more clear than another's, it does not follow that he has called reason to his aid. It must be remembered always that the art of painting is as inveterate in me as the art of writing, and that I am never altogether myself when far away from the smell of oil paint. Stella could talk to one about painting, and all through that wonderful summer described in *Salve* our talk flowed on as delightfully as a breeze in Maytime, and as irresponsible, flashing thoughts going by and avowals perfumed with memories. Only in her garden did conversation fail us, for in her garden Stella could think only of her flowers, and it seemed an indiscretion to follow

her as she went through the twilight gathering dead blooms or freeing plants from noxious insects. But she would have had me follow her, and I think was always a little grieved that I wasn't as interested in her garden as I was in her painting; and my absent-mindedness when I followed her often vexed her and my mistakes distressed her.

You are interested, she said, only in what I say about flowers and not in the flowers themselves. You like to hear me tell about Miss —— whose business in life is to grow carnations, because you already see her, dimly, perhaps, but still you see her in a story. Forget her and look at this Miss Shifner!

Yes, it is beautiful, but we can only admire the flowers that we notice when we are children, I answered. Dahlias, china roses, red and yellow tulips, tawny wallflowers, purple pansies, are never long out of my thoughts, and all the wonderful varieties of the iris, the beautiful blue satin and the cream, some shining like porcelain, even the common iris that grows about the moat.

But there were carnations in your mother's garden?

Yes, and I remember seeing them being tied with bass. But what did you say yesterday about carnations? That they were the——

She laughed and would not tell me, and when the twilight stooped over the high trees and the bats flitted and the garden was silent except when a fish leaped, I begged her to come away to the wild growths that I loved better than the flowers.

But the mallow and willow-weed are the only two that you recognise. How many times have I told you the difference between self-heal and tufted vetch?

I like cow parsley and wild hyacinths and——

You have forgotten the name. As well speak of a woman that you loved but whose name you had forgotten.

Well, if I have, I love trees better than you do, Stella. You pass under a fir unstirred by the mystery of its branches, and I wonder at you, for I am a tree worshipper, even as my

ancestors, and am moved as they were by the dizzy height of a great silver fir. You like to paint trees, and I should like to paint flowers if I could paint; there we are set forth, you and I.

I have told in *Salve* that in Rathfarnham she found many motives for painting; the shape of the land and the spire above the straggling village appealed to me, but she was not altogether herself in these pictures. She would have liked the village away, for man and his dwellings did not form part of her conception of a landscape; large trees and a flight of clouds above the trees were her selection, and the almost unconscious life of kine wandering or sheep seeking the shelter of a tree.

Stella was a good walker, and we followed the long road leading from Rathfarnham up the hills, stopping to admire the long plain which we could see through the comely trees shooting out of the shelving hillside.

If I have beguiled you into a country where there are no artists and few men of letters, you can't say that I have not shown you comely trees. And now if you can walk two miles farther up this steep road I will show you a lovely prospect.

And I enjoyed her grave admiration of the old Queen Anne dwelling-house, its rough masonry, the yew hedges, the path along the hillside leading to the Druid altar and the coast-line sweeping in beautiful curves, but she did not like to hear me say that the drawing of the shore reminded her of Corot.

It is a sad affectation, she said, to speak of Nature reminding one of pictures.

Well, the outlines of Howth are beautiful, I answered, and the haze is incomparable. I should like to have spoken about a piece of sculpture, but for your sake, Stella, I refrain.

She was interested in things rather than ideas, and I remember her saying to me that things interest us only because we know that they are always slipping from us. A strange thing for a woman to say to her lover. She noticed

all the changes of the seasons and loved them, and taught me to love them. She brought a lamb back from Rathfarnham, a poor forlorn thing that had run bleating so pitifully across the windy field that she had asked the shepherd where the ewe was, and he had answered that she had been killed overnight by a golf-ball. The lamb will be dead before morning, he added. And it was that March that the donkey produced a foal, a poor ragged thing that did not look as if it ever could be larger than a goat, but the donkey loved her foal.

Do you know the names of those two birds flying up and down the river?

They look to me like two large wrens with white waistcoats.

They are water-ouzels, she said.

The birds flew with rapid strokes of the wings, like kingfishers, alighting constantly on the river, on large mossy stones, and though we saw them plunge into the water, it was not to swim, but to run along the bottom in search of worms.

But do worms live under water?

The rooks were building, and a little while after a great scuffling was heard in one of the chimneys and a young jackdaw came down and soon became tamer than any bird I had ever seen, tamer than a parrot, and at the end of May the corncrake called from the meadow that summer had come again, and the kine wandered in deeper and deeper and deeper herbage. The days seemed never to end, and looking through the branches of the chestnut in which the fruit had not begun to show, we caught sight of a strange spectacle. Stella said, A lunar rainbow, and I wondered, never having heard of or seen such a thing before.

I shall never forget that rainbow, Stella, and am glad that we saw it together.

In every love story lovers reprove each other for lack of affection, and Stella had often sent me angry letters which caused me many heartburnings and brought me out to her;

in the garden there were reconciliations, we picked up the thread again, and the summer had passed before the reason of these quarrels became clear to me. One September evening Stella said she would accompany me to the gate, and we had not gone very far before I began to notice that she was quarrelling with me. She spoke of the loneliness of the Moat House, and I had answered that she had not been alone two evenings that week. She admitted my devotion. And if you admit that there has been no neglect——

She would not tell me, but there was something she was not satisfied with, and before we reached the end of the avenue she said, I don't think I can tell you. But on being pressed she said :

Well, you don't make love to me often enough.

And full of apologies I answered, Let me go back.

No, I can't have you back now, not after having spoken like that.

But she yielded to my invitation, and we returned to the house, and next morning I went back to Dublin a little dazed, a little shaken.

A few days after she went away to Italy to spend the winter and wrote me long letters, interesting me in herself, in the villagers, in the walks and the things that she saw in her walks, setting me sighing that she was away from me, or that I was not with her. And going to the window I would stand for a long time watching the hawthorns in their bleak wintry discontent, thinking how the sunlight fell into the Italian gardens, and caught the corner of the ruin she was sketching ; and I let my fancy stray for a time unchecked. It would be wonderful to be in Italy with her, but——

I turned from the window suspicious, for there was a feeling at the back of my mind that with her return an anxiety would come into my life that I would willingly be without. She had told me she had refrained from a lover because she wished to keep all herself for her painting, and now she had taken to herself a lover. She was twenty years younger than I was,

and at forty-six or thereabouts one begins to feel that one's time for love is over; one is consultant rather than practitioner. But it was impossible to dismiss the subject with a jest, and I found myself face to face with the question—If these twenty years were removed, would things be different? It seemed to me that the difficulty that had arisen would have been the same earlier in my life as it was now, and returning to the window I watched the hawthorns blowing under the cold grey Dublin sky.

The problem is set, I said, for the married, and every couple has to solve it in one way or another, but they have to solve it; they have to come to terms with love, especially the man, for whom it is a question of life and death. But how do they come to terms? And I thought of the different married people I knew. Which would be most likely to advise me—the man or the woman? It would be no use to seek advice; every case is different, I said. If anybody were to advise me it would be the man, for the problem is not so difficult for a woman. She can escape from love more easily than her lover or her husband; she can plead, and her many pleadings were considered, one by one, and how in married life the solution that seems to lovers so difficult is solved by marriage itself, by propinquity. But not always, not always. The question is one of extraordinary interest and importance; more marriages come to shipwreck, I am convinced, on this very question than upon any other. In the divorce cases published we read of incompatibility of temper and lack of mutual tastes, mere euphemisms that deceive nobody. The image of a shipwreck rose up in me naturally. She will return, and like a ship our love for each other will be beaten on these rocks and broken. We shall not be able to get out to sea. She will return, and when she returns her temperament will have to be adjusted to mine, else she will lose me altogether, for men have died of love, though Shakespeare says they haven't. Manet and Daudet—both died of love; and the somewhat absurd spectacle of a lover waiting for his mistress to

return, and yet dreading her returning, was constantly before me.

If often seemed to me that it was my own weakness that created our embarrassment. A stronger man would have been able to find a way out, but I am not one that can shape and mould another according to my desire; and when she returned from Italy I found myself more helpless than ever, and I remember, and with shame, how, to avoid being alone with her, I would run down the entire length of a train, avoiding the empty carriages, crying Not here, not here! at last opening the door of one occupied by three or four people, who all looked as if they were bound for a long journey. I remember, too, how about this time I came with friends to see Stella, whether by accident or design, frankly I know not; I only know that I brought many friends to see her, thinking they would interest her.

If you don't care to come to see me without a chaperon, I would rather you didn't come at all, she said, humiliating me very deeply.

It seemed to me, I answered, blushing, that you would like to see ——, and I mentioned the name of the man who had accompanied me.

If I am cross sometimes it is because I don't see enough of you.

It seems to me that it was then that the resolve hardened in my heart to become her friend . . . if she would allow me to become her friend. But in what words should I frame my request and my apology? All the time our life was becoming less amiable, until one evening I nipped the quarrel that was beginning, stopping suddenly at the end of the avenue.

It is better that we should understand each other. The plain truth is that I must cease to be your lover unless my life is to be sacrificed.

Cease to be my lover!

That is impossible, but a change comes into every love story.

The explanation stuttered on. I remember her saying: I don't wish you to sacrifice your life. I have forgotten the end of her sentence. She drew her hand suddenly across her eyes. I will conquer this obsession.

A man would have whined and cried and besought and worried his mistress out of her wits. Women behave better than we; only once did her feelings overcome her. She spoke to me of the deception that life is. Again we were standing by the gate at the end of the chestnut avenue, and I remember her telling me how a few years ago life had seemed to hold out its hands to her; her painting and her youth created her enjoyment.

But now life seems to have shrivelled up, she said; only a little dust is left.

Nothing is changed, so far as you and I are concerned. We see each other just the same.

I am no more to you than any other woman.

She went away again to Italy to paint and returned to Ireland, and one day she came to see me, and remained talking for an hour. I have no memory of what we said to each other, but a very clear memory of our walk through Dublin over Carlisle Bridge and along the quays. I had accompanied her as far as the Phoenix Park gates, and at the corner of the Conyngham Road, just as I was bidding her good-bye, she said:

I want to ask your advice on a matter of importance to me.

And to me, for what is important to you is equally important to me.

I am thinking, she said, of being married.

At the news it seems to me that I was unduly elated and tried to assume the interest that a friend should.

XII

It was three years after that the Colonel asked me to go to see some friends who lived in the Clondalkin district, and we

followed the quays talking of the woman we were going to see and her sisters in Galway, but when we reached the long road leading to the Moat House, a group of trees (one of Stella's motives) recalled her, and so vividly, that I could not keep myself from speaking of her.

I have no peace since her death. Not every day, I said, nor every night, else I should be dead by now, or mad; consciousness is spasmodic, and no warning is given. Any sight or sound is enough. She painted those trees; they hang in my room, feathery against a blue sky that has changed to grey, to everlasting grey. A touch of rhetoric had come into my speech. . . . Yet I was speaking truthfully, and the Colonel tried to soothe me.

Blame! Of course no blame attaches to me, and yet . . . I may have wronged Florence. But I never felt any remorse on her account, only on Stella's. The question isn't whether I gave her the best advice that might have been given in the circumstances; I gave her the only advice that was possible for me to give. I knew nothing but good of the man; and the advice I gave was the only advice she would have taken. No, I cannot reproach myself with anything, and yet, and yet—— Why did I speak in his favour? And that is what I am afraid no one will ever be able to tell me. Was it because I wished to free myself from all responsibility? There was none. She took her chance with me and I took mine with her—an equal chance in these days when women desert their lovers as frequently as men desert their mistresses. We were bound by no contract; it was no passing fancy, no infidelity that parted us. Again and again I have given thanks to my stars, to my destiny, to the Providence that watches over me that it is impossible to trace any connection between my confession to her and her announcement to me of her marriage. More than a year intervened.

I can't see that any blame attaches to you for the advice that you gave.

Nor can I, yet her death overshadows my life, and for no

reason. You see I told her, but not till she had admitted that she was going to be married, or was thinking of being married, that I had gotten a letter from Elizabeth, inviting me to come to see her. She had neglected me for years, ever since her marriage, but she is the only woman of whom I did not weary. A sister-mistress, I said. The Colonel, who does not understand these subtleties, kept silence. I had expected him to ask why I had told Stella of the letter, but the Colonel never asks personal questions, and I doubt if he was very much interested in my story. It may have been to drive her into this marriage that I told her that this other woman had written to me. What do you think?

I don't think it at all likely. She was determined on her marriage before she spoke to you about it. You have no reason to suppose that her marriage was not a happy one?

On the contrary, there are many reasons to think that it was a very happy one.

I don't see there is any cause for blame.

Nor do I, but her death is the one thing that I wish had not happened to me.

I waited for the Colonel to continue the inquiry, but he showed no inclination to do so, and his indifference exasperated me without shocking me as Edward had done when I had gone to him for sympathy, throwing all the blame upon myself, and he had answered: Why didn't she mind herself?—the pure peasant speaking through him; and to escape from the atmosphere of the cabin I looked toward the Colonel. Any mention, I thought, of Sarsfield and the Siege of Limerick would rouse him; but having no desire for a historical disquisition at that moment, I began to think out the whole story again, finding some consolation in remembering that it was not for any mere woman I had crossed two seas, but for her whom I had sought for twenty years, turning from many fallacious forms and vain appearances, till at length I discovered the divine reciprocation of all my instincts and aspirations, the prophetic echo of my eternity, one summer's

day among a luncheon-party in the Savoy Hotel. Certain moments cannot pass from us, and I do not think I shall ever outlive the moment when I rose from my chair to meet my fate in the Savoy Hotel. My readers do not need telling that the moving tints of a shot-silk gown did not cover a dusky body from Italy or Spain; they have guessed already that my fate came to me out of Flanders in all the fair bloom of her twentieth summer; the full, flower-like eyes, the round brow, the golden hair, a dryad by Rubens in appearance and withal a dryad's nature. If Rubens's dryad were to come upon a traveller's fire in a forest, she would sit by it warming her shins as long as it lasted, and then depart for lack of thought to rouse the ashes into flame, and I have often thought that Elizabeth treats the arts as the dryad the traveller's fire; she warms her shins and departs, and overtaking satyrs and fauns in mossy dells abandons herself again to her instincts. I can pick up a thread, I have heard her say, but continuity I cannot abide; and feeling that it would have been stupid to answer: You look upon me as a thread that can be picked up and dropped with every change of fancy, I fell to thinking how after a long day's journey I had come upon Elizabeth in a hilly country fronting great prospects of pasture in which kine wandered in long herds, and how she led me day after day through the woods, through sunny interspaces that I remember for many a pleasant frolic in the warm, fragrant grass. I remember the tasselled branches of the larches, the blackbird in the underwood, the thrush on the high branch, and the mocking laughter of the yaffle when he crossed from wood to wood; but Elizabeth remembers nothing; the dryad is without our human memories.

All the whiles of this summer pleasance somebody was dying near us; we were parted for many months, and when we came together again our love story was no longer told in the woods. Yet she seemed contented with me for a lover, and so docile was she in this Michaelmas summer of our love that I said: There will be no change. I wonder, I asked

her in my folly, if we shall love each other always, if in ten years' time—— She laughed, and three weeks after she took me aside to confide a strange project to me.

You don't mind, darling, if I don't see you to-night? I prefer to tell you —— has asked me if he might come. I can't well refuse. You don't mind?

It would be vain for me to try to oppose your wishes, and you would hate me if I did.

How well you know me! How clever you are!

The pair of shanks and ears that had come into our garden through the underwood disappeared soon after, never to return; and we resumed our love story; and then another pair of shanks and another pair of ears appeared, and these were succeeded by more shanks and ears, and the thought became clear that the last leaves were falling, and that no renewal of our love would ever happen in my life again. Love, she had said, is for the young and for the middle-aged, and I was growing old, the love of the senses was burning out, and it would be better to quench it by a sudden resolve than to keep blowing upon the ashes. By fifty, I said to myself, we should have learnt that human life is a lonely thing and cannot be shared, and that we are further from our mistresses when they throw their arms about us than we are when we sit by the fire, elderly men, dreaming of the kisses given and the words said in distant years. Recollection is the resource of the middle-aged, so says Turgenev in one of his many beautiful stories. So did I reason with myself, and for two or three months I believed that love would never flame up in my life again, but one evening a lady whom I had known many years ago crossed a restaurant, and I ran to her for news of a friend of hers. She had not heard of Doris for some years, and in reply to my question if Doris were married she said she had not heard of any marriage, and becoming suddenly anxious about this girl I wrote to her relations, who answered that Doris was not married; but my letter had been forwarded to her, and to this letter came

a delightful answer from Florac, a town that will be sought vainly on the map. It will be discovered, however, in a story entitled *The Lovers of Orelay*, and if the reader of *Vale* be wishful to know what happened at Orelay he can do so in a volume entitled *Memoirs of my Dead Life*, but he need not read this novel to follow adequately the story of *Vale*. The difference between one man and another is so little that I could come to no other conclusion than that dear Edward was right and that women cannot be adjudged an aesthetic sense. Man, I said to Dujardin, possesses an aesthetic sense, but he is not an aesthetic animal like cats, horses, or women, and he had answered me that woman's point of view is different from man's, an argument that calls into question the reality of the visible world. I don't think the point has ever been fairly argued out; however this may be, I have never been able to get it out of my head that women are idealists, and that it is their natural idealism which enables them to ignore our ugliness. Extraordinary! I said, for looking into Doris's face I could see that she was pleased and happy; and the thought came into my mind that if Lewis Hawkins were to see us together he would be astonished by it, for it had always been his conviction that no woman could ever love me. I remembered his hardly concealed pity of my ugliness, his sudden inspiration that I should grow a beard for my chin deflected, and how I had been taken to a tailor, and instructed when the clothes came home how I must lean against the doorpost and look through the ballroom. The company should be gazed at with indifference; a nonchalant air, he said, attracted women, and many years of my life were spent trying to imitate him. Time, he said to me, wears away everything, even ugliness; you will be more interesting after thirty than before. And it was he who told me that Goethe had said, We had better take care what we desire in youth, for in age we will get it.

The pedant that was in Goethe muddied this utterance. We do not choose our desires; he should have said, If we

desire in youth ardently, our desires will be fulfilled in age. But what is truth? the sage has often asked, and the aesthetician in me regretted Doris's taste for elderly men, and, stopping before the *armoire à glace* at Orelay, I had felt intensely that this love story was no frolic of nymph and satyr, but a disgraceful exhibition of Beauty and the Beast.

Theories, however, avail us nothing, and it was not till several months after parting with Doris that I began to reconsider the important question—important, for no man lives who can say he is not interested in the question when a man should begin to try—how shall I put it? Well, to avoid unplatonic love encounters. But is an encounter ever platonic? A question for grammarians, for me it is to tell that a few months after my return to Dublin a lady called to see my pictures, and that the encounter of our lips sent the blood rushing to my head, and so violently that for ten minutes I lay where I had fallen on the sofa, holding my splitting temples. My time for love encounters is over, I said, reaching out my hand to her sadly. . . . She was too frightened to answer, and after proposing a glass of water was glad to get away out of the house. A sigh escaped me; my head was quieter, and, struggling to my feet, I stood by the window watching the hawthorns blowing. At last words came to me: Love's period is over for me. Life is for ever changing, and very little remains after fifty for a man and still less for a woman. We are for ever dying. Woolly bear is succeeded by the cricket bat, the bat is followed by the rod, the gun, the horse, the girl, and between fifty and sixty we discover that our love-life is over and done. Our interest in sex, however, remains the same, but it is an intellectual interest, changed, transformed, lifted out of the flesh. Our eyes follow the movement of the body under the silken gown, a well-turned neck and shapely bosom please us, and we like to look into the feminine eyes and read the feminine soul; but we do not kiss the point of white shoulders when thoughtless ladies lead us away after dinner into a corner of
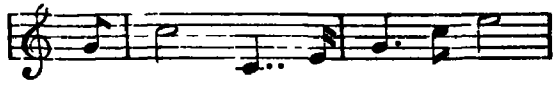
a shadowy drawing-room and cry in our ears, No, all is not over yet.

I wandered out into the garden, finding consolation in the thought that one does not grieve for a lost appetite, for a lost power, for a lost force. Horrible, I said, and my eyes wandered over my garden, for the month was October. The dahlias were blackening and the Michaelmas daisies were growing slattern; soon there would be no flowers left but the flower that never fails to remind me of the mops with which coachmen wash their carriage wheels. The swallows must be by now half-way across the Mediterranean. Soon they will be nesting among the stones of Cheops' Pyramid, and, my thoughts returning to myself, I said, My mother used to say that I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth. Celibacy is set above all the other virtues in Ireland, and the Irish people will listen to my exhortations now that I have become the equal of the priest, the nun, and the ox. Chastity is the prerogative of the prophet, why no man can tell, and dear Edward, to whom the virtue of chastity is especially dear, believes that it was the stories of what the newspapers would call my unbridled passions that had caused the Irish people to turn a deaf ear to my exhortations that they should speak Irish and write Irish, and to my prophesying that a new literature would arise out of the new language, or the old language revived.

My thoughts unfolded, and I remembered how strangely I had been moved the night in the Temple when Edward said he would like to write his plays in Irish. *The Tale of a Town* had brought me to Tillyra, and I had caught sight of Cathleen ni Houlihan in the dusk over against the Burran mountains as I returned through the beech-woods and the dank bracken. The rewriting of *The Tale of a Town* had awakened the Irishman that was dormant in me, and the Boer War had turned my love of England to hatred of England, and a voice heard on three different occasions had bidden me pack my portmanteau and return to Ireland. The voice was one that

had to be obeyed, but Ireland had not listened to me and until now it seemed that I had misread the signs. But Nature is not a humorist. She intended to redeem Ireland from Catholicism and has chosen me as her instrument, and has cast chastity upon me so that I may be able to do her work, I said. As soon as my change of life becomes known the women of Ireland will come to me crying, Master, speak to us, for, at the bidding of our magicians, we have borne children long enough. May we escape from the burden of child-bearing without sin? they will ask me, and I will answer them: Ireland has lain too long under the spell of the magicians, without will, without intellect, useless and shameful, the despised of nations. I have come into the most impersonal country in the world to preach personality—personal love and personal religion, personal art, personality for all except for God; and I walked across the greensward afraid to leave the garden, and to heighten my inspiration I looked toward the old apple-tree, remembering that many had striven to draw forth the sword that Wotan had struck into the tree about which Hunding had built his hut. Parnell, like Sigmund, had drawn it forth, but Wotan had allowed Hunding to strike him with his spear. And the allegory becoming clearer I asked myself if I were Siegfried, son of Sigmund slain by Hunding, and if it were my fate to reforge the sword that lay broken in halves in Mimi's cave.

It seemed to me that the garden filled with tremendous music, out of which came a phrase glittering like a sword suddenly drawn from its sheath and raised defiantly to the sun.



XIII

Since the day I walked into my garden saying: Highly favoured am I among authors, my belief had never faltered that I was an instrument in the hands of the Gods. But the chosen of the Gods are always given the needful means for the accomplishment of the Gods' mighty purposes, and for many months I had stood perplexed, but never doubting. I had striven to fashion a story, and then a play, but the artist in me could not be suborned. Davitt came with a project for a newspaper, but he died; and I had begun to lose patience, to lose spirit, and to mutter, I am without hands to smite, and suchlike, until one day on coming in from the garden, the form which the book should take was revealed to me. But an autobiography, I said, is an unusual form for a sacred book. But is it? My doubts quenched a moment after in a memory of Paul, and the next day the dictation of the rough outline from the Temple to Moore Hall was begun, and from that outline, decided upon in a week of inspiration, I have never strayed. I had not been to Moore Hall for many years, and loath to go there had often said to Miss Gough: Why should I go to Moore Hall? for it is all mirrored in memory; all the beautiful curves of the bay are before me, along Kiltoome and Connor Island.

But if the lake hasn't changed, the country has, and you'll bring back many new impressions and moods.

You may be right. The gentry have gone and the big houses are in ruins, or empty or sold to nuns and monks, who are the only people who can afford to live in fine houses. Ballinafad is now a monastery. You'll see Ballinafad. I know it as well as Moore Hall. But you haven't seen it as a monastery?

You may be right. I'll go. Nature is full of surprises. Prolific mother of detail, I'll go to thee.

Ballinafad lies away to the left between Balla and Manulla,

and on stepping out of the train I said: To take in Ballinafad would mean a round of four or five miles. I will instead drive over from Moore Hall. But where is the Colonel's gig? and overtaking the porter I laid hand on his shoulder and he told me that if the Colonel's gig did not arrive soon, my best chance of getting a car would be in the village. He promised that as soon as his work was finished he would go down and inquire, but he was afraid Johnnie MacCormac had gone to Westport, and if Johnnie wasn't at home the only thing to do would be to telegraph for a car to Balla. And Balla being seven miles away, I should have to wait an hour and a half at Manulla Junction, watching grey sky and bridge, listening to the plaint of telegraph wires. The porter said he thought he heard a yoke coming up the road. He'll cross the bridge over beyant; and the bridge became at once the object of interest to me. It's his yoke right enough. You'll be off now in no time; and these words were spoken in a tone that convinced me the man was conscious of his melancholy lot. But I couldn't stop at Manulla to keep him company; as soon as I left he would be as lonely as before; and the Colonel's groom being anxious to excuse himself for being late told me had gone to Derrinanny to sleep with his wife overnight.

I wonder where the station-master and the porters live?

Are you after leaving anything behind you, sir?

No, I was merely wondering what they do when not at work at the station. There are only two trains in the day. The boy thought there were three, but he would be able to find out at the grocer's. So there is a shop in Manulla?

We'll be passing it in a minute, sir; we're just going into the village now.

Nobody was about; we saw neither cat, nor dog, nor pig in the muddy street; the groom mentioned, however, that the Colonel knew the priest, and as soon as we passed his chapel the fields began again, uneventful little fields, for there was neither tree nor brook to be seen, nor any one at work in them. Great stones had rolled down from the walls into

the boreens leading from the main road up a landscape that it would be flattering to call hilly; it was merely a little tumbled. Over the hillside a cabin showed sometimes, and at last a dog bounded out of one, and I said:

Where there's a dog there's a man, and where there's a man a woman isn't far off—isn't that so?

The boy did not answer, and, as seemingly he could not be persuaded into talk of any interest, I continued my survey of the country, noticing, for lack of something else to do, that it had flattened out without becoming a plain, and that the clouds were gathering on the horizon in a mass foretelling a downpour. But to mention that we were in for a wetting would only provoke a monosyllable from the boy. On the whole, the better chance of conversation seemed to be in a comparison between the Manulla and the Balla Road.

The Colonel thinks this is the easier road.

It doesn't seem to be quite so hilly, but it is treeless, whereas on the Balla road there are trees nearly all the way to Moore Hall. Ballinafad—by the way, Mr. Llewellyn Blake has settled the monks at Ballinafad, hasn't he?

So I've heard tell, sir.

And how do the country people like that, and they going to get the estate divided between them?

The boy called to the pony, and I had to repeat the question.

The monks is giving fine wages at Ballinafad.

But how much they were paying he could not tell, and I tried to forget his presence, remembering that on the road out of Balla we leave Athy Valley on the right, and I took pleasure in recalling Sir Robert Blosse and Lady Harriet; their children I never knew. A little farther on was Browne Hall; Edith and Alice were beautiful girls. The Browne Hall and the Ballinafad estates were contiguous, and Joe Blake going off to Castlebar races with his arms round his serving-maid's waist rose up in my mind as if it had been yesterday. And two miles farther up the road is Ballyglass,

our post town; the mail coach used to change horses there, and I remembered my mother reining in her ponies so that we might have a good view of the coach as it came swinging round the bend. The men that clipped horses lived in Ballyglass, in a cottage with a pretty flower garden in front—a rare thing in Mayo; and from the gate of Tower Hill to Carnacun the road is wooded, between Carnacun and Moore Hall the hills are naked, and the Annys River dribbles through the low-lying fields under Annys Bridge to Lough Carra.

We shall turn into the Castlebar road presently, shan't we?

Yes, sir, round by Clogher.

Clogher! the name carried my thoughts over the years to the time when we went thither to gather cherries and were suffered to tear down branches unreproved. There were four girls at Clogher—Helena, Lizzie, Livy, and May. Lizzie was the merriest, and her inventiveness won my father's admiration, for, needing a hearth-rug for her doll's house, she set a trap and caught a mouse. My father delighted in this association of images—a mouse-skin rug for a doll's house; and as we drove toward Moore Hall it seemed to me that I could see Clogher and its dead girls quite plainly. No more than a little mist had come between us. In another instant I shall be pondering on life and its meaning, I said, and looked round for something in the landscape to which I might direct the lad's attention. May we not hope for a fine day after all? I asked him, and the question seemed legitimate enough, for at that moment a ray lit the worn field in which a yoe bleated after her lamb to come at once to relieve her udder. He did not answer, so I pressed him with:

The lamb is the first sign of spring. The lamb comes before the daffodil. Do you know the flower?

Do you mean the daffydowndilly, sir?

That's what old Betty MacDonald used to call them.

We're just turning into the Clogher road, sir.

Yes, and yonder is the police-station, and beyond is the cross-road—to the right Castlebar, to the left Carnacun.

You've a fine memory, God bless it, yer honour.

The whitewash of the Clogher police barracks struck through the trees the same as forty years before, and I began to wonder what answer the boy would make if I were to tell him that the trees had not grown a foot within forty years. I suppose the police are always after the girls now as they were in my time? and the boy answered me: Them fellows do be too busy oiling their quiffs to put the comether on the girls.

As soon as we pass the barracks, I said, we shall turn to the left and there will be hazel-bushes and rocks on both sides of the road, and about two hundred yards farther on we shall get a blink of Carnacun Lake where the hill drops. But the groom was not listening, and I fell to thinking of the pretty brooks one sees in England, purling and curling between low green banks, and shadowed by willow-trees. The willow follows the brook, and the Irish landscape lacks brooks and willows. Lakes are not in my temperament, I said; and set myself to remembering the many different lakes that we catch sight of from our roads; and then my thoughts were whisked away to Domnick Browne, who went to New Zealand, taking with him a bundle of hazel rods for walking-sticks, forty years ago, and did not write to me till he discovered that he could trace me no further back than Charles V., but himself went back to Charlemagne. A wonderful thing life is, I said, and began to notice the endless stone walls between Moore Hall and Manulla, loose walls dividing little fields with a hawthorn growing in one corner and two magpies flying—whither? The people and the country are still savage, I mused, and Ireland is without pleasant objects to look upon, though why there have never been windmills in Ireland it would be difficult to say, for there is plenty of wind. In my childhood there were a few water-mills, and it was pleasing to recall the day when the governess and the Colonel and myself had tripped over to Tower Hill to watch the mill-wheel. But long ago that mill stopped working. Yonder is Carnacun Lake, behind

a scrubby hillside with the pines forment it, as the groom would say if he could be persuaded into speech. The lake seemed smaller than I remembered it, but he could not tell me if it were drying up. I looked forward to the cross-roads, and it was pleasant to see that the smith's forge was still there, and Grayon's house, one of my tenants, the tenant of Ballintubber, a wealthy man, even forty years ago, for he could afford to lend me two hundred pounds . . . money spent during my minority. The chapel stood up over the village on a knoll, and the fringe of trees about it was as ragged as when our carriage used to turn in the gateway. The smith's house and three or four cabins with sagging roofs were still the village of Carnacun; nothing had been added or taken away, and I looked out for the house licensed to sell beer and tobacco. It was there, as dark and as dismal as of yore, a threshold that any moralist would approve, and above it was the great wall of the ball alley denounced by Father James Browne in his sermons: You think I don't be hearing your brogues about the doorways, and after I have gone up the steps to the altar, he used to say. And now the rival of his Mass had fallen into ruins, some of the cut stone had tumbled out of the high wall, weeds had sprung up in the alley, and Father James's house, to which I liked to ride my pony for a Latin lesson, was a ruin too. The present priest lives higher up the hill, in a two-storeyed house with plate-glass windows; but does he read Virgil for his pleasure and drink as good port as Father James? Be this as it may, it will always seem to me that a great deal of the character of the village of Carnacun has gone with the old cottage under the ilex-trees, the ball alley, and Father James Browne. His image has nearly faded from my mind, but I can still recall a high-shouldered man with a large hooked nose and a complexion like a Crofton apple, whose wont it was to walk about the parish in a torn cassock seeing that everybody was about his business. He would hop over the wall down into the road and out of the road again, on to the path across the triangular field to the school-house over

yonder on the hillside. Why, Misther School-masther, do you mind being called the school-masther? You are the school-masther just as I am the parish priesht. I don't mind being called the parish priesht. I like being called the parish priesht, so why should you not like being called the school-masther? So class distinctions were beginning to jar even then, I said. And to this school we owe the disappearance of the Irish language from this part of the country. I remembered the children returning from this school along a road that winds through damp fields on one side, melting almost into bog about the Annys River; on the other side the land rises, and all the cabins appeared just as I had left them; a little improvement was noticeable in the last one; a sty it used to be in old time, amid cesspools, unfit truly for an animal to live in. My hope often was that no human being would come out of its doorway until we had passed it by, and I recalled the satisfaction with which I learnt one day that this cabin was not on our but on the Tower Hill property. I anticipated the elder-bushes a few yards farther on, and could still see my mother and my governess in my thoughts gathering elder flowers for they were supposed to be good for sunburn, and myself cutting elder stems to make pop-guns. A path leads over the hill to the right, and down to the left a boreen runs along one of our woods, to Runnineal, a Tower Hill village by the Annys River, and the house under the pines where the main road strikes through is a wood-ranger's lodge, the dwelling of a man called Murphy, whose welcome I used to dread; for, like a great big dog, he would run out of his house or saw-pit when he heard the wheels of the car, and his bark of welcome followed us until we reached the little bridge that spans the bog drain. In those days a path was a wonderful thing, much more wonderful than a road, and there was an enticing little path by the bridge-head. My governess forbade it; but one day I succeeded in persuading her to wander down it, and we had followed it through some young fir-trees; and yet undaunted I had implored that we should

follow the path through a wood, and it had led us at last to a field golden with buttercups and a drain in which wild irises grew. A little farther on we spied another path leading up the hillside, a dark and suspicious path, but a girl who dropped a curtsy told us that it would lead us right on to the stables of the Big House. We had dared to follow it too; and had come upon dells, open spaces, and copses, and trees of every kind; silver firs in whose vasty heights I was certain there were wood-pigeons' nests; and as we descended the hill on the other side a rowan delayed us; the berries were just beginning to redden, and immediately after we were in the bog road which was well known to us, and at the end of our adventure. Red rowan berries and blue irises are not of the same month; two memories seem to have got mingled. No matter, this wooded hillside was once full of adventure and mystery, and there was a dark place under the turret at the end of the garden into which I did not dare to go, bramble-covered hollows into which I used to peep and then run away, afraid to look back. But the day came when I pushed my way through the dark coverts, and lo! there was nothing. Suddenly the pony stopped, and whilst the driver opened the gates I admired the fine ironwork and the cut-stone pillars topped with round balls that the Colonel had brought from Newbrook, and it looked handsomer even than I had expected, though the Colonel's praise had led me to expect a good deal. It had opened upon one of the Newbrook avenues a hundred years ago; cut stone was not so costly then as it is to-day; even so, money must have been more plentiful in those days, for the gateway obviously represented a great deal of labour. In those times everything came off the land: mutton, beer, butter, bread, jam; the stewards, gardeners, butlers, and huntsmen came from the village, the housemaids too, for feudalism had lasted in Ireland down to 1870. But the peasants have come into possession of the lands from which they were evicted, and are now felling the trees of the beautifully timbered parks—trees two hundred years old are being

sold at eighteen-pence apiece at Newbrook. And the trees that I am now looking at—the Moore Hall trees—will soon after my death be felled, the gateway will be offered for sale again, and the cut stone will find its way into cottage walls.

The pony stopped in front of the high pitch in the road, jerking me forward in my seat, and began the laborious ascent whilst I looked out for the tall laburnum up whose slippery stem I had never succeeded in swarming. It was among the gone; some hawthorn-bushes I missed too, and very little was left of the great lilac-bush that marked another path to the stables. We had looked forward to seeing it when we walked out with our governess, and I remembered how one day in mid-summer, after chasing through the woods, playing at Red Indians, yelling as we imagined Red Indians yell on the war-path, I had thrown myself into a haycock just by this lilac-bush, and planned the morrow: we would bring out whips with louder lashes and extend our adventure into mysterious places whither we had never dared to venture. But the next day the woods had lost some of their mystery. When summer returned the ghouls and fairies had died out of my imagination, and finding that I no longer experienced any desire to crack my whip, or to hide in the lilac-bush, or to roll in the hay, I went to old Joseph to ask him how this was. He answered I had grown older. . . . The drive turned round a hawthorn, passed through a glade, and I looked out for the next lilac-bush, for it was within its perfume that I had had my first religious conversation with the Colonel. It, too, was among the gone, but on the left, on the brow of the lawn, were two holly-trees into which I had shot many an arrow from the steps. But the laburnums that had once decorated the head of the drive, had they died too, died of old age or for lack of human companionship, the laburnum being a familiar tree?

The last ascent is steep, and the pony walked every step of it, not consenting to trot till he reached the gravel sweep in front of the square Georgian house with the great flight of

steps and big pillars supporting a balcony. On these steps a couple of red setters were always waiting—a special breed for which the house was famous. Nell rose up before me in her colour, in her shape, in all her winsome ways. A better dog never drew the scent of a covey of partridges or pack of grouse, and she would retrieve a duck far out in the reeds. My father often beat her for coursing hares, but despite these beatings she could not bear to be separated from him, and one evening he pulled her out of the lake into the boat saying that she had been swimming after us for more than an hour, and that if the large trout had not delayed us outside the reeds, she would have gone on swimming till she sank. Her son, Saddler, the biggest setter ever known—like a Newfoundland he was, and not a single white hair in his coat—used to lie in the hall on the mat. One day my father mentioned that the dog always snapped if he was stirred out of his sleep, and looked round with a bewildered air, and then suddenly seemed to recover himself. Saddler was suffering all this while from rabies, and as soon as the veterinary surgeon saw him he ordered him to be shot. Blush and Ruby were the last setters that adorned the steps, and the steps were the only part of the architecture that I ever liked, Moore Hall not being in my early taste, which was for brick, and perhaps it is still, for houses that have been added to by different generations rather than for grey square blocks with pillared balconies. Moore Hall had always seemed to me a Mansion House inferior to Clogher and Tower Hill. But it is superior to either, for it was built in 1780, and it was with a sense of relief that I had heard from the Colonel in Dublin that the roof had been raised by my father after winning some big races. The old roof was fifteen feet lower, and the slates that covered it were the small green Irish slates like tiles mortared together. I learnt from him that it had never been completely water-tight, and constant leakage having rotted the beams, the roof had to be raised. So my antipathy to this eighteenth-century house was to some extent justified. It

was no longer eighteenth century; its eighteenth-century proportions had been spoilt by the new roof and by the plate-glass that my father had put into the windows of the hall and dining-room and drawing-room, and I felt sure that if I were ever to come to live in Moore Hall, the whole countryside would have to be searched for the old hand-made glass with rings in each pane like blobs of grease in soup. But I had always liked the imposing flight of steps, the iron railings, the pillared balcony, and the hall with its Adam ceiling, and should have liked the rooms on either side better if they had not been decorated in accordance with Victorian taste. It would seem that my father's journey to the East had to expend itself somehow, and being a clever man of many aptitudes he had designed a Greek room in an interval between racing and politics. His room had filled my childhood with admiration But the straw colour and the blue-grey chosen for the walls had faded in the course of forty years, and the decorators that had come from Dublin when the Colonel went into his residence at Moore Hall had failed to divine the original tints in the faded; the Colonel had warned me that they had failed, but I was not prepared for so complete a failure, and the somewhat coarse, very nearly vulgar appearance that had been given to the room set me thinking that perhaps it would be well to replace all this plaster of Paris with a pretty French paper. But who could restore the Adam ceiling? I asked myself, as I crossed a hall of fine proportions, and untouched, I muttered, as I went into the dining-room. My father's pilasters and parquets in variegated woods displeased me, and I felt certain that if Moore Hall were to be the end of my life the drawing-room and dining-room would have to be brought into harmony with the hall and the roof lowered some ten or fifteen feet; my father was too near the Georgian period to appreciate it, I added, and, raising my eyes from the carved merman and mermaid on either side of the fire-place to my ancestor in the red coat, I began to wonder if the painting were Spanish. . . . Be that as it may, my

grandfather is a Wilkie for sure; and just as I had arrived at this conclusion the Colonel bounced in, fresh and rosy from the farmyard, all breeches and gaiters, and anxious to show me round the house, and I followed him into the hall. It opens on to a wide passage with a staircase at either end, and off this passage there were four rooms—our old school-room, the water-closet, and two more rooms opening one into the other, and known as the doctor's and the priest's room. All these rooms the Colonel had thrown into one, and he had brought down grandfather's book-cases and set them along the walls, achieving in this way a fine room, no doubt; but a long narrow room is un-Georgian, and character in a house is as important as in a man. No one sits in a long, narrow room. The fireplace is necessarily at one end, so while our left side is freezing our right is being roasted. Rooms should be square, there can be no doubt about it; and the present library is at another disadvantage—it overlooks a backyard, a desert place surrounded by high walls, the top of the walls spiked like a jail. This desert place was once set round with outhouses; a scullery opened on to this yard, and the hen-house was next to it. There was the wood-house, and on the other side of the gate was a turf-house, and in the right-hand corner I remembered the great chimney of the brew-house where William Mullowney's father brewed the household beer. But that was before my time. Our beer came from Ballinrobe in the 'sixties: our beer now comes from Dublin.

In old times the backyard was the centre of activity. The water for the house was brought from the lake in a water-barrel, the cart stood in the yard with the mule-boy beside it, and when the maids had filled their cans he put the mule into the shafts and went away to the lake again, leaving them to exchange words with the garden-boy, their gossip interrupted by the voice of the cook or the arrival of the ass from the bog with creels of turf, which the turf-boy would carry up the back staircase, emptying his load into the great barrels that stood on the different landings, filling with special care the

barrel in Joseph Applely's pantry, and I think it was Joseph who told me that these vats had come from Spain filled with port and sherry. And my thoughts passing into dialogue, I said: You have read all the family papers and can tell when these importations of wine ceased. After our great-grandfather's death probably. The Colonel could not tell me if this were so, and so inveterate a dreamer is he that he led me to the pantry window to ask me if it would be better to rebuild the outhouses or cover in the yard.

Cover in the yard! I said.

Why not? A series of arches and a terrace on the top.

And a flight of steps would serve from the higher to the lower terrace.

And on either hand vases——

Or rare pieces of sculpture, I said. The Colonel looked distressed. But how would the yard underneath be lighted?

By side windows.

And the drip? The rain would have to go somewhere. On our way to the bathroom he explained how the drip might be mitigated. Here, he said, is the bathroom, and I answered: 'Tis well: but the great eighteenth century knew not bathrooms, and we talked of the footpans and the bidets that once formed part of the furniture of every bedroom, and the disrepute into which bathing had fallen since Roman times, all through the Middle Ages, until Anglo-Indians reintroduced the habit of the thorough washing of the body into Europe. From the bathroom window we caught sight of the ruined privy under the beech-trees to which our ancestors were wont to adjourn in the morning, their pipes in their mouths, to talk the news, and the news was always of a racehorse, or a duel, or a hunt. We have improved upon those times, yet our neighbours still allow their dogs to deposit ordure upon our doorsteps in London. And whilst I meditated on humanity's slow advancement, the Colonel told me that he had chosen my father's dressing-room for the bathroom. I never should have had the courage to make the change, so

real is my memory of the room as it stood in my father's lifetime, himself seated at the great bureau full of countless drawers at which he wrote his letters, or standing before the toilet-table between the windows covered with cut-glass phials of macassar oil, pots of bear's grease, many kinds of ivory brushes, tortoiseshell combs of all sorts and sizes, some destined for the hair of the head, some for the whiskers, relics of the days of his dandyhood, for he must have been a great dandy when Anonymous turned a shoe at Liverpool and Corunna won the Chester Cup.

He liked me to come into his dressing-room to talk to him while he lathered his face, and I remembered the lie I told him when he asked me if I had used the top of his silver shaving-pot to knock in a nail, and his alarm when I stumbled over the long s's in grandfather's edition of Burke's speeches. I have forgotten his reproofs to me, but can still see him in my thoughts opening the green-baize door, and can almost hear him communicating the direful tidings to my mother. As she showed little or no alarm the governess was sent for and it was put to them : Had they ever known or heard of a child of seven who could not read Burke's speeches without faltering in an edition printed with the long s's ? Before Miss Westby had time to answer, my mother said that she didn't believe that any child of seven could read the long s's without faltering, and I can recall his long mouth speaking through the latter, telling that when he was three he used to read the *Times* aloud to his mother at breakfast. My mother's incredulity exasperated him ; he ordered my governess and me to the schoolroom, and for days we sat reading a very indifferent history of England by one Lingard. We listened with apprehension while Joseph Applely brushed the master's silk hats and arranged his gloves for him in the hall, and we breathed more freely when we heard the hall door clang, for we knew then he had gone to the stables to run his fingers down the horses' forelegs, and our hope was that his interest in the morning gallops would help him to forget my lessons.

We passed the door of the room to which my mother had taken me to pray by the death-bed. It had not been in use since mother's death. The Colonel was with her; he had probably seen her die, and I supposed that that was why he had chosen for himself the two rooms at the end of the passage —rooms that I recollected as grandmother's rooms; and after visiting them he threw open the door of the summer room, a pretty room opening on to the balcony that the four great pillars support, and in an instant the room returned to what it had been forty years before, my father sitting at the rose-wood table in the evening, drinking a large cup of tea, telling me stories of Egypt and the Dead Sea, Baghdad, the Euphrates and the Ganges, stories of monkeys and alligators and hippopotami, stories that a boy loves. We left the room to go to the rooms that were once grandfather's library. The Colonel had turned them into bedrooms. Grandfather's spirit seems still to animate these rooms, I said. The Colonel did not answer, and then I seemed to apprehend something that had hitherto escaped me: Moore Hall had always seemed alien and remote to me because it was pervaded by the minds of those that preceded me. My grandfathers and grandmothers were underground, but along the landings and in the large rooms opening on the passages I seemed to be aware of mentalities different from my own. Nor is it strange that this should be so, Moore Hall not having been subjected to any new influences after 1870; and going down to luncheon with my brother I felt I should never be able to live in this house; I should always feel my grandfather sitting by me wondering how it was that his grandson should practise so familiar a style, one so unlike Gibbon.

I should always be engaged in imaginary dialogues, I said, telling him he did not always write like Gibbon but like me in his preface to the *French Revolution*, and that the preface is the best part of it. If you were to say that, said the Colonel, he would answer, But you haven't read my history of the French Revolution. I asked myself if the Colonel intended

a reproach. After luncheon, he proposed to show me the garden, but I could barely see it, so clear was my memory of the old eighteenth-century garden with its rows of espalier apple-trees and four great walnut-trees, one in each plot. The two great ilex-trees whose branches leaned in front of the turret were gone; the turret was in ruins, and the Colonel had felled a good many beeches along the twenty-foot wall to get light and air for his fruit-trees. I was sorry for these.

But nothing grows under them, he explained, and led me round his peach and pear and apple and cherry-trees, and while he explained the different varieties, I dreamed of the sweet-briar hedge that divided my mother's flower-garden from the plots in which we had once grown potatoes, cabbages, onions, spinach, chives, parsnips, cauliflowers, beans, asparagus. The asparagus-bed was never a great success, because of the walnut-trees which my father would not allow to be felled, his mother having planted them. Even more distinct in my memory than these trees was a great apple-tree—a very venerable tree, moss-grown and carious. It stood up a little beyond the flower-walk, and near it, tucked away in a corner, was a dense growth of raspberry-bushes enclosed by a thick hedge, a dangerous place in my imagination, one in which witches and other evil spirits were to be met, but the fruit tempted me, and my governess once boxed my ears for having hidden myself among the raspberries. And then we came upon the ruins of the greenhouse from which we used to steal the grapes, even when the door was kept locked, and my father once beat me with a horse-whip for breaking the panes, and now, elderly men both of us, the Colonel and I stood looking at a large cut-stone chimney that the Colonel had saved in case I should care to rebuild the greenhouse again. Cut stone is very expensive, he said, but in our grandfathers' days labour was cheaper; and we passed into the stables, none of which had fallen. There was the box in which Croagh Patrick neighed when the boy brought his sieveful of corn. How he plunged his muzzle into it! for he was a greedy feeder and

ready to kick any one that came near him till the last grain was licked up. In the next box I had seen Master George, one of the best horses of his year, only a few pounds behind Croagh Patrick at a mile and a half, and his superior at two miles, a terrible buck-jumper that would have dislodged any cowboy. The little ponies that these horsemen ride have not sufficient strength to throw them out of the high Mexican saddles, but Master George was sixteen hands and a half, and when his head disappeared between his legs it was no easy thing to keep on a six-pound saddle, and the tightest might have been flung out of it as I was three times one morning before breakfast, these falls irritating my father scarcely less than the long s's had done eight years before, compelling him to declare that no horse could unseat him. Joseph Applely smiled and went out of the room, and next morning my father was thrown in front of the house by the holly-trees, breaking his collar-bone, and the doctor had to be sent for. The Colonel started to enumerate: Wolf Dog, Anonymous, and Corunna have dragged hay out of those very racks, he said; and the coach-house recalled the coach hung on leather straps, and the great phaeton, likewise on leather straps, which hardly ever went out—a museum piece it was—and the tiny phaeton in which our mother used to drive Primrose and Ivory, a beautiful pair of ponies. The great fir at the back of the stable, in front of the hayrick, reminded me of the day that Joseph Applely took me out for a walk and taught me a little bird-lore. The nest he showed me at the end of the bough was a goldfinch's, and we explored the woods together, and far clearer than to-day is that fragrant morning by the hawthorn-tree all in flower, Joseph lifting me up to see into the blackbird's nest. And I remember his voice: You mustn't touch the eggs, Master George, or the bird will forsake her nest. But how will the bird know? Let's try. We must go back, Master George, and if we return at one we shall get home in time for dinner. Let's go a little farther, Joseph, and find some more nests. I

cried, for it did not seem to me that I should ever want dinner again.

But of what was the Colonel thinking? He is like his father, discreet; therefore not a man of letters, and we talked about the foreign firs which our father had planted in the 'sixties, and they seemed to me to be out of keeping with the landscape. Deodars may be suited to India, I said, and the Wellingtonia may be well enough in California, but here they are detestable; and far worse than the deodar and the Wellingtonia is that cypress los—— something, a tree of vile habit, sending down branches to take root, creating a little jungle. The Colonel admitted the habit, which he could not well deny, but he could not be persuaded to send round for a couple of hatchets, urging that felling trees is not the light work that I imagined it to be, the real reason being that he is as averse as I am from felling a tree, an aversion inherent in every sensitive nature, one might almost say in every nature except the woodcutter's; habit has blunted his; he has forgotten the original instinct of tree-worship, and perceives no longer the mystery of the vasty height sprung out of a single seed.

It was while I was thinking these things that the great walls of the farmyard rose up through the beech-trees, eighteen or twenty feet high, enclosing buildings of all kinds; stables for many cart-horses, granaries, barns, haggards, byres, smithies. A great deal of cut stone had been used in these buildings, and the Colonel had saved many pieces from the ruins of the smithy, and these he said would come in useful when the time came to rebuild the farmyard. I liked to hear him dreaming his dreams while I meditated the question whether it were crueller to fell an ox or a tree. Behind that wall I had seen death for the first time, and with that kind of morbid pleasure which one feels in wounding oneself, I recalled how the shepherd had come one day into the yard driving half a dozen sheep before him, and how, stopping in my play, I asked him why he had brought them from the fields He

answered me that Friday was always killing day, and putting out his crook he caught a sheep by the leg and felt for the fat; but not being satisfied with the animal, he allowed it to escape from him. Again he put out his crook and caught another, and again he was not satisfied; three or four sheep were tried; it may have been over the fourth that he muttered, This one will do, and led it into a corner. He and his boy stretched it on a slightly raised platform, and I asked why a bucket was placed under its head. To catch the blood, Master George, the shepherd answered as he sharpened his knife; and all this ritual was so enticing that I waited impatiently, and marvelled how it was that the sheep accepted death without a bleat, looking at us all the time with round, peaceful eyes, in which one could read neither love of life, nor fear of death, nor reproach. At last the eyes began to glaze, and I said to the shepherd, He has begun to die, and the shepherd pressed the sheep all over with his great strong fingers, urging the blood out of the wound in the neck. A few days later we were stopped in our walk by strange squealings, and scenting death, we appealed to a peasant; and he told us the butcher was killing pigs. We ran from our governess to see the pigs killed; we hid from her in a stable, and did not venture out till she had given up the search. I'm afraid you're late; he's a goner by this time, the peasant called after us, and when we arrived at the farmyard the carcass was being cut up and salted, and it would be some time before the butcher would be ready for another. The Colonel was a little diffident, uncertain whether he should stay to see a pig killed, but perhaps ashamed to go lest I might laugh at him. I took on authoritative airs, and bade the men hurry, returning now and again to the dung-heap to watch the pigs; there were eleven or twelve rooting and rolling, happy, for the warm May sunlight caressed their sides, and apparently the screams of their fellow, now passed away into salt pork, had not disturbed them. Standing by them I picked out the biggest to be taken next, a pigheaded

animal that contested every yard of the way, two rustics dragging him, and myself applying an ash-stick as a goad to his rump, and so cruelly that one of the rustics begged me to desist. He was bleeding under the tail when he was hoisted to the platform, and I felt ashamed of my cruelty; but he was a vicious brute that would have bitten the butcher had it not been for the rope about his snout. The butcher worked his knife slowly through the neck; and I plied him with questions: Why was it that pigs squealed when they were being killed and sheep died without uttering a bleat? Was it because it hurt pigs more to die than it did sheep? The butcher answered that pigs were noisy devils; somebody else added that they liked music, the bagpipes especially—answers that perplexed me; and I stood watching the blood, noting that with its flowing the squeals grew fainter and fainter. Dead he seemed such a stupid thing that I began to wish him alive again. My governess came into the cow-yard saying she had been looking for us everywhere; our dinner was ready and we must come at once. But we haven't got the bladder yet. The butcher put his hand into the pig, tore it out, and handed it to us all stinking, our governess begging us to relinquish it, but we explained to her that we were going to blow it out and tie it to the end of a stick. We shall want two more bladders to beat each other with, I explained, and hurried the Colonel through his dinner. I would have brought my sister to the farmyard, where still some more pigs wallowed in the dung-heap outside's Fright's stable, waiting the great experience of their lives—the butcher's knife.

Fright was a very handsome thoroughbred horse. He had won some big races—the Cesarewitch, I think—and had gone to the stud with a deformed foreleg. My father was sure Fright would get winners if he were given the right mares, and the horse stood at Moore Hall for many years at ten pounds for thoroughbred mares, five for half-breds; the groom's fee was, I think, the same in every case, five shillings,

and it was a very well-earned five shillings, for Fright needed a great deal of coaxing and encouragement before he showed any interest in the mare waiting for him in the yard outside his box, and he would certainly have gone to the knacker's if he had not neighed at the sight of some cart-mares as Pat Kelly was bringing him home from exercise. And seeing that the mares were in the horse's mind, Pat began to tell me how he had spoken in the horse's ear. I was all ear, but Pat became reticent suddenly, and I was left pondering on the mystery of the continuous existence of life in this world.

I had been told, as every child is told, that babies were found under gooseberry-bushes, and had accepted the explanation for some years, but between the ages of ten and twelve this explanation seemed hardly worthy of a boy's serious credence, and I had accepted the only other possible solution—that the female produced children unaided, and had begun to regret my sex when Pat Kelly's words made life seem again worth living. And not to find myself lacking when my day came, I used to bide in the carpenter's shop (the carpenter's shop being next to Fright's stable) so that I might hear Pat encouraging the horse with all kinds of coaxings: That's the old boy, that's the old man, and sometimes with so little effect that Pat's mouth would grow dry and he would curse the horse, and after cursing him he would start another set of coaxings, at the end of which, perhaps, the horse would be led out of the stable. It was then time for me to run out of the carpenter's shop and climb into one of the beech-trees overlooking the yard. One day I succeeded in persuading the Colonel to come with me, and that was the very day that Pat pointed us out to our father, who called to us to come down and caned the Colonel severely.

With all these memories flocking through my mind, it was sad to see the carpenter's shop in ruins, for in it I had spent many days with Micky Murphy trying to learn to use the chisel, the plane, and the saw; but to no purpose did I labour, for I was without handicraft, less gifted than the

carpenter's son. The Colonel had never collected hatchets and hammers, saws and chisels, planes and gouges, files and augers and gimlets, and perhaps that is why he had bought an old saw-mill in Ballinrobe and established it in a corner of the haggard where, once upon a time, there used to be great sport ferreting rats in the wheat stacks built upon short stone pillars about three feet from the ground, with a slab on the top to keep out the rats. But a mischievous boy, preferring a rick full of rats to his father's grain, will leave a plank for them to climb; and when threshing-day comes, the rats will scurry before a ferret with the dogs in full tilt after them; and if perchance a curious dog should try to appreciate the smells of rat and ferret and get his nose bitten, he will cry, You'll know better next time, Towser.

Outside the barn was a curious old threshing-machine; two horses yoked to a great beam were the motive power; and these set going within a little stone circle all kinds of wheels and cogwheels, and in response the winnowing-machine inside the barn clattered; and when I came to see how the work was progressing, the women smiled upon me as they fed it with sheaves, asking me not to come too near lest I should have my fingers chopped. When the threshing-machine went out of gear, the flail was flung, and dodging the thresher's weary flingin' tree, I would snatch a handful of grain and throw it to the finches waiting in the fir-trees on the hillside; not out of kindness of heart, but to entice them to their death; for when they assembled in sufficient numbers and were pecking unmindful of danger, two barrels of a fowling-piece were loosed upon them, and the ground was quickly covered with blood and feathers. A boy must learn to shoot, and whilst learning he fires at blackbirds and thrushes on the lawn, at the jackdaws as they hover about the chimneys, at the magpies as they fly from thorn to thorn, and the gulls flapping about the lake's shore are shot at again and again; gulls will dive after a wounded gull, and so the sportsman has a chance of shooting gulls till his heart sickens. And then

wandering from the shore into the woods he will shoot a squirrel, a badger, a raven; hawks and owls he considers it his duty to loose upon, and wood-pigeons, too, for they are greedy birds and the farmer does not reap where he has sown. A boy lusts to kill; he will set dogs after a cat, and one day a very beautiful white cat was hunted out of the laundry into the lofts and then out of the lofts; and when the cat escaped by a broken window the dogs were set after her, and when puss crossed the road, the dogs in hot pursuit, she was forced to take to one of the trees growing out of the shelving hillside. The laundry-maids came running down the road pleading for their cat, but a barbarous boy climbed the tree and shook her out of the branches, and in imitation of a huntsman pulled out a knife and cut off the cat's head and distributed the flesh, treating the cat as if she were a wild animal—a hare or a rabbit—whose function it is to provide us with sport as well as food.

You would like to see the Stone Park, the Colonel said. The name of the field awakened a memory pleasanter than the infamous hunting of the cat, a gathering of nuts one summer evening long ago with two laundry-maids and a stable-boy. Perhaps there is nothing that takes a deeper hold on memory than the drawing down of boughs laden with fruit in the dusk of a dead day. We had gathered till strange shadows began to move about the fairy ring spared by my father when he set to work to redeem the Stone Park from the hazel, more acres being needed for the growing of oats, so numerous were the racehorses at Moore Hall at this time. The corn prospered in the virgin soil and a great crop was expected; but our horses got none of it, for our peafowl had encamped in the middle of the field, leaving only a fringe, and the villagers muttered when the birds took to their heels or their wings: The master would have done well not to have meddled with the good people!

The good people seem to have recovered their holding, I said to myself whilst seeking the road that our father

had built. But all trace of it was lost in a jungle of blackthorn and hazel. Our mearing was the wall of the great park that had once extended round Castle Carra, and whilst the Colonel narrated his plans for the second ridding of the Stone Park by means of dynamite, I heard him break off in the middle of a sentence: The goats again! and away he went with thirty or forty goats trotting in front of him. It is just as I suspected, said he a little later. They feed on green boughs during the summer, but just at this time of the year they come over the deer-park wall in search of grass.

He told me that he had thought of shooting them, but was afraid to raise up hatred against himself in the country, for the goats were not altogether wild; for certain somebody had a claim upon them. And he continued talking, but for a long time my thoughts were among the days when we clambered the deer-park wall and wandered to Castle Carra, a great stronghold in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, abandoned so it was said, in the seventeenth, or later, the descendants of the great chieftains having gone to live in the modern house, now a ruin like the castle. In the 'sixties a herdsman lived in a corner of it; we bought goat's milk from him, and how good it was in the noggins, foaming over the brims! The circumstances of the abandonment of the castle must have been wonderful. Or was it abandoned by degrees? At one time all the headland was fortified, but of this vast castle little remains except the central tower or fort, now grown about with thorn and hazel. My mother's wont was to repeat verses from *Marmion* as we passed under the gateway, and our tablecloth was laid on the grassy space which we believed to be the ancient banqueting-hall. Above us were glimpses of staircases built between the walls, and one day I climbed up the wall and mounted the stairs. But the chieftains had left neither treasure nor pistols nor swords behind them.

We might do a little clearing every year, the Colonel broke in, and all the trees that we get out of the Stone Park can be cut up by the saw-mill, creating a provision of fuel for

the house, and in ten or twelve years we shall find we have added many acres of arable land to the estate. Aren't you listening?

Yes, I'm listening, and I think you're right; in about ten or twelve years Moore Hall will have returned to the Moore Hall of before-times. But have you been to Castle Carra lately?

He had visited Castle Carra some three or four months ago, and the castle was crumbling; last Christmas there had been a great downfall; the old gateway had wellnigh disappeared, and he did not think the castle itself would last more than fifty years. The great modern or quasi-modern house, to which the chieftains repaired when private wars were no longer recognised as lawful, is passing away, he said, even more rapidly than the castle. I found pieces of the great stone fox that stood in the middle of the courtyard and the two hounds one on either side among the brushwood. Another thing. Castle Island needs repair. Michael Malia was on the island last summer, and he tells me that the base of the old castle is insecure, but that a few pounds would make it safe.

My dear Maurice, it is sad to see ancient Ireland passing away before our eyes. But we cannot rebuild ancient Ireland, and it is clear to me that as soon as I am gone Moore Hall will be pulled down to build cottages in Derrinanny and Ballyholly, or the house will become a monkery or a nunnery. Which would you prefer?

The Colonel sought refuge in silence, and I read in the melancholy that overspread his face that the abandonment of family property to the prelacy was distasteful to him. And now that Llewellyn has given Ballinafad to the monks, he may, I said to myself, be more willing than he was some years ago to allow me to bring up one of his children a Protestant, on condition, of course, that I leave him Moore Hall. I had written to him once on this very subject, and his answer had reached me in Paris. A very angry letter it was, characteris-

ing my proposal as infamous and outrageous. Why should my proposal be looked upon as infamous and disgraceful? I had asked myself, and I began to ask myself again the same question. He may, I said, think differently now; circumstances have changed. Moreover, the proposal might be put to him again in conversation; words pass rapidly; there is no time for anger if they be dealt out skilfully; and I thought how after dinner, when his wife had gone to bed and we were sitting in two armchairs before the turf fire, I might begin by complaining that now that Stella and Walter Osborne and Hughes were gone, Dublin had become a little too small for me. He would ask me whether I was going to London or to Paris. Paris would introduce Dujardin's name, and I would tell him that Dujardin's ambitions were to found a new religion in which there was no dogma, only rite. The Colonel would shrug his shoulders and ask how rite could exist independently of dogma, and I would answer that there was no dogma in ancient religions. The Colonel would answer, Judaism, and I would explain incidentally that the Jews had never indulged in heresy hunting. It was not permitted to insult Jehovah, and anybody who did so was condemned to death, as Socrates was condemned for insulting the Gods. Dogma and its concomitant, heresy hunting, arose when? What Pope founded the Holy Order? The Reformation would be mentioned, and it would be an easy transition from the Reformation to my proposal.

We make these plans, but very rarely do we adhere to them; and after dinner, when we two were sitting in the drawing-room, without prelude or introductory matter of any kind, I said:

My dear Maurice, I have a proposal to make to you. I am quite willing to pay for the education of your eldest son, and to leave him any property and pictures that may remain after my death, but I should like to bring him up a Protestant. Our family is a Protestant family; there are one or two apostates, it is true, but——

I should never consent to what you are proposing. You needn't go on.

I'm sorry for that, for of course it is impossible for you to deny that Catholicism makes for illiteracy. As I have pointed out again and again, Catholicism has hardly produced a book worth reading since the Reformation.

But I deny that completely.

It doesn't suit you to admit it. But this you will admit, that if Catholicism degrades, corrodes, paralyses, and stupefies the intelligence, its day is over.

I admit that, if your premises be correct, but I deny your premises.

To deny is easy ; but if what I say be not true, if Catholics have written as well as Agnostics and Protestants, the books are known. Name them.

At the end of a long waste of argument, I said :

Well, if you are convinced that the Catholic is equal to the Protestant, why not bring the matter to the test ? Do you bring up one of your sons a Catholic, I will bring up the other a Protestant, and back him to be the superior of the Catholic boy, to the extent of five hundred pounds. I'll be generous. If I win, I will give the five hundred to the Catholic as a sort of consolation prize.

The proposal you are making to me is utterly inacceptable and horrible. I can't think of anything more detestable than that I should give you one of my children to be brought up in a religion of which I disapprove, and that I should be tempted to do this by a promise that you will leave him money ! If, later on, my children were to tell me that they preferred Protestantism to Catholicism, I don't say that I shouldn't be sorry, but I should do nothing to prevent them following the religion which they wished to follow, but if they were to change their religion in order to inherit property, or to get money, I should hate the very sight of them.

But, my dear Maurice, nobody except Cardinal Newman ever changed his religion for theological reasons. All changes

of religion are brought about by pecuniary or sexual reasons.

The Colonel did not answer. He lay back in his armchair white with passion, the first time I had ever seen him lose his temper since he was a little boy. It would have been easier to let the matter drop, but I had determined to make a last attempt to save the boy, and could not stop half-way.

You told me I libelled my great-grandfather when I hinted that he became a Catholic because it was impossible to carry on business in Spain as a Protestant.

And I say so still; but we're not talking now of our great-grandfather, but of my children.

But you knew that our great-grandfather never became a Catholic, and knowing the truth why did you conceal it? Because you are a Catholic?

We are talking now of the religion my children are being brought up in, and I say that your proposal is not an honourable one, and if possible it would be less honourable of me to accept it.

Everybody has his own ideas of honour; there is no fixed standard; but it is a very common thing, as you must know, that when parents are divided in religious beliefs some of the children are brought up in one religion and some in another, and it would be difficult to impugn the fairness of such an arrangement. I am prejudiced in favour of Protestantism for intellectual reasons, and because my life is moulded on facts rather than upon sentimentalities. And the answer I got from the Colonel was that I looked at the world through a narrow tube and could only see one spot at a time, and that my opinions were always as narrow as the tube; and then, getting angrier and angrier, his face bleaching with a passion which I could not help admiring, for at all events he was himself in this scene, he reminded me that I had said I would leave Moore Hall to his children, but no sooner had I said that than I began to impose conditions. In the beginning they were to learn Irish, that was the condition; now a new condition was to be imposed, they were to be brought up Protestants.

Not both, only one, I protested; and if I pay for his education you can't expect me to bring up a boy in a religion which I think paralyses the intelligence. Your concern is with the possibility of a future life, the soul's arrival in Purgatory and its subsequent release by means of Masses paid for the Pope's indulgences, and——

XIV

And when on a subsequent occasion my brother told me, in answer to a question, that I had been paying fifty pounds a year to the Jesuits, and afterwards one hundred and thirty a year to the Benedictines for the education of my nephew, I uttered the cry or moan of a man taken with a sudden sickness. The sensation the news brought me was, strangely enough, physical, a sort of fainting in the very bowels, or else I cannot describe it. I wrote to you from Paris offering to pay for my nephew's education, I said, if he were brought up a Protestant, and the answer I got was that my proposal was a dishonourable one. How, then, could you think that I was willing to pay for a Catholic education? and it has been going on year after year and I was never told. His answer was that he would repay me; and with the transference of some hundreds of pounds from Cox's to the National Bank, the question of money would be settled between us. But there is no question of money, I bewailed. I don't care a fig for the money. But the deception . . . I could not answer him further; the shock of the discovery deprived me of any power of reasoning, and I ascended the stairs, thinking as well as I could that any calamity had been preferable to the one that had befallen me, and that I should have been paying for the education of a Catholic while meditating *Hail and Farewell* rankled like salt in a wound. While writing *Ave* and *Salve*, I muttered, and a deeper sense of unhappiness than I had ever known before began to steal over me as I

dragged my feet along the landing to the room in which I was to sleep.

I shall get no sleep to-night, I said, raising the blind in the hope that the moon shining on the lake would calm me; and my eyes roved over the dim outlines of the lake into the pearly distances neither blue nor grey. A moment later the words: He is a born Catholic, fell from my lips, and the phrase seemed to me to represent a truth hitherto unexpected or insufficiently appreciated. We do not acquire our religion, we bring it into the world. We are born Catholics or Protestants. Catholicism and Protestantism are attitudes of mind. And I pondered the question for what seemed a long while, awakened suddenly by the thought that if my nephews had a worth they would discover themselves to be Protestants. From eighteen to twenty-one is the time when we stick for ever or find a way out. Every man of worth chooses a religion for himself, and so my money has been only wasted; but it has not gone to the moulding of a soul. All the same, I would not have had this happen, no, not for all the money in the world. And I fell to thinking how I had laughed and jeered at dear Edward because he dreaded lest his money might be applied to the production of heretical plays; yet here was I suffering from the same dread. The perfect circle of the moon detained my thoughts a little while, and the lonely castle beneath it set me thinking of savage hordes of Welsh and Irish disputing for possession of the island. But however far our thoughts may wander we are awakened by the old pain. My senses sickened again. A judgment upon me, I cried, for having jeered at dear Edward! And at the words: dear Edward, my thoughts sped away to Bayreuth and returned to my brother and to our childhood. My mind, I said, is like an ever-veering wind, and sleep will be sought in vain; all the same, I must seek sleep. And all night long the same thoughts revisited me, marching round my brain like prisoners in a yard, high walls, and no strip of sky above the multitudinous bricks. Round and round they go, I cried,

and then away went my thoughts again, and of what I was thinking when I fell asleep I cannot tell.

Your bath-water is ready, sir.

Yes, yes, I answered, and turned over. If I could only cease to think! But the moment I see him I shall begin to think again of Jesuits and Benedictines. Of what shall we speak? I asked, and going to the bath, and in the bath, and coming from the bath, I tried to discover subjects of conversation, lingering over my dressing, and so advantageously that Evelyn was dispensing tea and coffee when I entered the dining-room, and after breakfast I thanked her inly when she said:

Now, Maurice, won't you take George out and show him the new gateway, which he says he has not seen sufficiently?

The Colonel murmured some answer, and whilst hustling himself into his old yellow overcoat, he told me that the part of the ironwork missing from the gates brought from Newbrook had been supplied by the smith at Carnacun, and that he was curious to hear if I should be able to distinguish the old from the new. The stonework was complete, all except two knobs; these Michael Malia would be able to replace, and the cost would not be more than five or ten pounds a knob. His optimism was somewhat dismal, for I never imagined anybody living in Moore Hall again, and after viewing the gateway which had only cost me forty pounds, we turned down the road to the gate lodge, now empty, the Colonel having succeeded in expelling its late tenant, his gardener. A gate lodge, I said, is generally beside the gate, but this one is fifty yards away. The Colonel declared it to be an excellent house, and I meditated, for this gate lodge was associated in my mind with many memories. It had a loft which was reached by a ladder, and I had often thought that I would like to sleep in a loft among the hay; and there was a deep drain beyond the garden at the edge of the wood, and down this drain I had often floated on a raft made out of a plank and the shutters from the windows, into deep water under the bridge. It was a thrilling experience to find oneself on a raft under an

arch, but the novelty wore away quickly, and one day I had undertaken a longer voyage, punting the raft down the drain into the lake. But in the lake the punt pole (a branch torn from a tree) had proved insufficient, and the freshening wind had carried me and the raft out into the open lake, and looking at the Colonel I remembered him crying among the rushes while I debated my chances, whether it would be better to remain on the raft trusting it to carry me to some island, or to throw myself from it into the lake in the hope that the water was not deep enough to drown me. The waves leaped higher and higher, threatening to wash the shutters from the plank, till at last it became clear that the chance that the water was not deep enough to drown me would have to be accepted. It rose to my chin, lifting me off my feet, and I continued wading, hoping not to stumble into a hole. Yes, I said to the Colonel, I had a near escape that day from drowning, and now I can still see you running along the strand crying for some one to come and save your brother. If the accident had happened a few years before, he said, you would have been drowned; the lake was deeper, and he told me how in the 'sixties a young engineer had come down from the Board of Works with a project for draining Lough Carra into Lough Mask, but our father had offered such opposition to the scheme that it had to be abandoned. Up to the 'seventies, I answered, we were feudal lords, and he was listened to in the House of Commons when he said that he could not allow a small Sahara to be created before his front door. We controlled our landscapes in those days, or it may have been that the shores of Lough Mask were implicated in this drainage scheme. As likely as not it was discovered that the draining of Lough Carra would inundate the shores of Lough Mask. A weir was therefore constructed in the River Robe, said the Colonel, and his words revived the day I had brought a boat from Lough Carra to Lough Mask and had put back frightened by the great waves of that gloomy lake.

Our father saved Lough Carra, but it is for certain many

feet lower than it used to be; and I reminded the Colonel of the great pleasure-boat about whose rotting planks we often played in childhood. It had been allowed to rot under a group of pines, standing some fifty or sixty yards from the lake's edge, by the side of a walled trench, once its harbour. For to what other purpose could the walled trench have been put? we often asked our governess, our subsequent questions drifting into dim speculation as to how many pounds it would cost to mend the boat; and if Micky Murphy could mend it if he were paid ten pounds. This rotting boat appealed to our imaginations, for its seats would hold a dozen or more ladies and gentlemen, and there were rowlocks for eight oars, and the Colonel and I were wont to imagine the great picnic-parties that had sat under the sail, for there was a hole in one of the seats for a mast. Was Castle Hag or Castle Island the destination of these picnic-parties? we asked each other; and was there a turkey stuffed with chestnuts in the hamper? We were certain that there were cakes and fruits and jams, and that the footman spread a snowy cloth in the glade under the castle wall. Our governess read while we dreamed. We! Did the Colonel dream? If he did, he never told me his dreams. He is reticent about his dreams, but garrulous about externals, and as we walked round the shores of Lough Carra for the last time, he regretted that he had not brought with him the key of the new boat-house, for he would like to show me his brother-in-law's boats, rowing-boats, skiffs, wherries, a steam launch, and a yacht. A shrunken lake for certain, else the reeds would not have thriven. —— had had to cut a passage through them for his boats, and the Colonel unfolded a project to me whereby the lake might be cleared of reeds, and before he had reached the end of his project we were at the bridge that stretches over the turlough (a turlough in Mayo is a low-lying field, that is flooded in winter), and he pointed out the pump that drew the water from a well out in the middle of the lake—a well that old Betty MacDonald told us was once up in Kiltoome, but it had suddenly descended

and had sprung up in the lake, with a ring of grass around it, for it was a holy, or maybe a fairy, well. She was not quite sure which. The pump had cost me two hundred pounds, but I had to admit that if people were to live at Moore Hall, a pump was necessary. The walls require mending, I remarked, coming upon a cottage that my father had built but had never put a roof on; and I added, A ruin that will supply excellent material for the building of necessary walls.

But the Colonel said there was plenty of stone, and no need either to pull down the cottage or to roof it. The walls were probably too rotten to bear a roof, and, speaking of the Congested Districts Board, he said, They even ask for the paddock, the field behind the cottage. The fields beyond the gate were Corrour, the New Gardens, Lough Navadogue, Rochetown, and our father's racecourse, on which he had trained Corunna, Wolf Dog, Anonymous, Croagh Patrick, and Master George, to number a few of his famous horses, and all these fields the Congested Districts Board required.

So that the holdings of three tenants might be extended, the Colonel said; and if you yield, Moore Hall will be no more than a villa in the midst of a wild country; cottagers within the woods right up against Kiltoome, and who can say that pigsties will not be built? The present cottagers would probably prevent the pigs from rooting in the graveyard, but the cottagers fifty years hence will have no scruples. The Board insist on acquiring all the land right up to Kiltoome, and at their own price, and if you refuse to sell, the Board may refuse to buy your other estates, Ballintubber, and those in Galway and Roscommon. A very serious matter for you if the Board refused to buy.

How is that?

The next move of the Board will be to stir up all the tenants to combine in a campaign against rent—like putting a stick into a wasp's nest, the Colonel added, with a deep note of anger in his voice. So far as I understand, the proposal is to leave you Derrinrush.

We returned to Moore Hall, and so gloomy were our thoughts that we turned aside instinctively from the Dark Road and ascended the steep lawn together.

My dear Maurice, Moore Hall was built in feudal times. Read the tablet over the balcony, 1790, and feudalism continued down to 1870; a big square house on a hill, to which the peasants came every morning to work. You remember the bell that hung over the laundry? It rang at seven, and before it ceased clanging our labourers assembled and were bidden to their day's work; and a shilling a day was fine wages in those good times. And you remember the women coming from the village with their husbands' and brothers' dinners? Half a dozen boiled potatoes tied in a cloth, and a great dinner it was if they got a noggin of buttermilk from the cook. They ate their potatoes and drank their buttermilk under the hawthorn hedge in the backyard, if the day were fine, and, if it were wet, in byre or stable. The young men wore corduroy trousers and frieze coats, the old men were still in knee breeches and tall hats; a red petticoat hung to the women's knees and they wore a printed handkerchief round their heads. We were kings in those days; little kings, but kings for all that, with power of life and death as has been said and truly, for we often sundered wife and husband, sister from brother; and often drove away a whole village to America if it pleased us to grow beef and mutton for the English market. And in those days the peasants were afraid to thatch their cottages lest their rent should be raised, nor was there one peasant in our villages or in the Tower Hill villages worth a ten-pound note. The Colonel asked me if I remembered a cabin in the middle of Annys bog, a dwelling hardly suited for an animal, yet a man and woman lived there and children were born in it, and I answered him: We used to pass it on our walks, you and I and our governess. Yes, I remember it, and I remember one day up in the mountains while grouse-shooting stabling my horse in a man's cabin. But we shall never be able to do it again. The landlords have had their

day. We are a disappearing class, our lands are being confiscated, and our houses are decaying or being pulled down to build cottages for the folk. All that was has gone or is going. Moore Hall represents feudalism.

I think that anybody who would like to live in a comfortable house——

Square rooms and lofty passages conformed to the ideas of our ascendants, and jerry-built villas, all gables, red tiles, and mock beams, stand for modern taste and modern comfort; hot water on every landing and electric light. Nobody wants a real house unless an American millionaire, and it is not because of its reality that he wants it but for its unreality. It is unreal to him, and having a great deal of money, he indulges in eccentricity. In this way the old world is carried on by Americans; even in England there are very few houses that are the capitals of the estate they stand in as Moore Hall was up to fifty years ago. Moore Hall is out of date, and it astonishes me that you don't feel it. I wish in a way that I could summon sufficient courage to pull it down and sell it; it would make excellent rubble to build labourers' cottages, and if I could I would cut down every tree and lay the hillside bare. Why not, since I know it will be laid bare a few years after my death? The fate that overtook Ashbrook hangs over Muckloon. It will be given over to peasants, like Ashbrook. You remember the piece of tapestry that was woven in Ashbrook by our great-grand-aunt or grandmother and is now on exhibition in South Kensington Museum? I wonder how long it will be before another piece of tapestry like that is woven in Mayo. In the dining-room hangs a portrait of a lady with a dog, painted by a young girl in Galway. Is there one in Galway now who would paint as well? No. With all our so-called culture, sculpture, painting, architecture, and the art of the use of words are disappearing. By the way, Maurice, I don't know whether you have heard my theory that the age of art is over as much as the Stone Age.

People have always been saying, he answered, that the age of art is over. I could cite you many passages from Elizabethan writers in which they deplore the decline of art and the English language. They were wrong, I replied, that is all. But it cannot be denied that there was neither art nor literature in Europe in the Middle Ages, from the sixth, shall we say, to the twelfth century? The Colonel answered me that art cannot flourish in the midst of invasions; and he began: Rome was sacked by Alaric in the fifth century, and in the same century Europe was overrun by the Huns, headed by Attila, and a century later the Saracens invaded Europe and were defeated by the French at the Battle of Tours; and as we walked toward the house he explained that if this defeat had not taken place we might all be Mohammedans now.

But do you think that the sleep of Mohammedanism is a deeper sleep than the sleep of Catholicism? I beg your pardon for introducing the religious question. You are appreciative of the trend of the past, but seem blind to that of the present. I cannot help being sorry for my poor country that has never been able to show a brave face to the world. Some extraordinary curse seems to have been laid upon this land in the tenth century or about that time. Ireland was something then; she had a religion of her own—and she was inventing an art of her own. Up to the tenth century it looked as if God intended to do something for Ireland, and in the tenth or the eleventh century he changed his mind, and ever since the curse seems to have been deepening. In another fifty years Ireland will have lost all the civilisation of the eighteenth century and will be a swamp of peasants with a priest here and there, the exaltation of sacraments and whisky her lot, and a hundred legislators united only in protecting monkeries and nunneries from secular inquisition. The Colonel did not agree with me that the gentry were dying out of Mayo. The Brownes of Breaghwy and the Lynches of Partry had been building lately. My dear Maurice, you will not see things as they are. Or is it that you don't remember

Mayo in the days of the gentry as well as I do? Athy Valley is empty, and you told me that you and an old peasant had searched for traces of Browne Hall, but could find none. Ballinafad is a monastery. The Blakes are still in Tower Hill, and a last Lynch lives his lonely life in Clogher. Cornfield is empty, and will be pulled down very soon. The Knoxs have left Creagher. Newbrook is sold, and the masonry distributed—part of it is at the end of the drive. Brownestown House was burnt before our time, but not much before it. How many more? The Lamberts are gone. What was the name of their place? Brook something.

Every class has its ups and downs, and there is no doubt that ours is going through a crisis.

No crisis whatsoever. We have outlived our day, that is all; and in thirty years we shall be, as I have said, as extinct as the dodo, unless religion comes to our aid. You seem not to have heard of the New French party—the Catholic Atheists? Religion is to be taught again in the hope that man may be persuaded to forgo the joy of a woman's bosom for the sake of Abraham's. The Colonel laughed, but he was not pleased, and to break the irritating silence he told me that Castle Carra had been sold to the Congested Districts Board, and out of the arch, built during the famine, a row of concrete cottages had been run up according to specifications. The old deer park will supply some material, I said. The jungle will be grubbed up; you will get rid of the goats. And we talked on in this fashion, and after dinner resumed the same talk, saying the same things over and over again; and when we ascended the stairs to our beds, about eleven o'clock, the Colonel promised to drive me over to Llewellyn's monastery next day.

Llewellyn Blake is my uncle, my mother's youngest brother, and he came into the property of Ballinafad on the death of Joe Blake, famous in the county Mayo for many racehorses and a love story. Joe seems to have been the only one in the family whose soul did not trouble

him. His brother Mark, from whom he inherited the property of Ballinafad, was a fine old country rake, leaving samples of his voice and demeanour and appearance in every village, and then going to Dublin to repent his sins, attaining in the last years of his life the spectacular appearance of Father Christmas, causing much annoyance in the chapels that he frequented from his incurable habit of interrupting the services with Oh, Lord; oh, Lord; my unfortunate soul! Llewellyn is as tall as his brother Mark, two or three inches over six feet, large in proportion, with sloping shoulders, snapping his words out and then relapsing into silence. He used to be much admired at dances in the drawing-rooms of Merrion and Fitzwilliam Squares, and in the old Royalty Theatre he patronised the Muse Terpsichore. But those days are over and done with, and, like his brother Mark, he has become uneasy about his soul. He was warned of its disease by me years ago, but he paid no heed to my warnings, and convinced of its continuous existence, and that priests can help him to save it, he has founded a monastery. I should do the same if I were a Roman Catholic, but the Colonel, who is one, would have me try to prevent the founding of this monastery by action at law, and I am still trying to understand the Colonel who believes in the efficacy of masses for the dead, but seems to think that Llewellyn's relations should come before his soul—a most impossible Colonelesque argument; and the spirit fumed within me to express my point of view; but I put chains upon my spirit, and Carnacun went by for the last time. We were on the heights of Ballyglass when the struggling spirit sundered its last fetters, and I said:

How is it that you disapprove of this monastery? It seems to me that you should, on the contrary, urge me to found another at Moore Hall. You believe that masses for the dead will get your soul out of Purgatory. If you don't, you are not a Catholic. Now, why shouldn't we have a little plump of monasteries in Mayo? At Moore Hall we could have Benedictines; at Clogher Franciscans. Lynch is a Roman

Catholic: he has got no children, what better could he do? At Tower Hill some arrangements might be come to with the Blakes to put in Trappists. You don't know what order is in Ballinafad? The Colonel answered sullenly that he was not sure whether Llewellyn had founded a mission house or a monastery. Well, no matter. This little plump of monasteries sending up prayers for your soul, for Llewellyn's soul, for Lynch's soul, and for the souls of all at Tower Hill; and the prayers bringing down the archangels constantly, crooks in their hands, pulling you one after the other out of Purgatory. The Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost; nectar perpetually on tap, and aureoles that never wear out. A rich prospect before you all!

An ironical smile, deliberately introduced, pervaded the Colonel's face, and it said as plainly as words: How very superficial you are, and vulgar, quite vulgar!

My dear friend, I am sorry for bringing up this question again. It is the fault of Llewellyn Blake.

Count Llewellyn Blake. He has been made Count of the Papal States, said the Colonel.

But why laugh? In his eyes the Pope is not only a spiritual, but a temporal power. His title is more valid than any other. Don't you think so?

The Colonel never answers these questions, and while wondering at my own detestable character in thus plaguing him, I looked round the fields. They seemed very small and dim. And yet, I said, that gleam of light falling across the worn fields reminds us that summer is coming in. The fine days we meet in January are illusory, but the ray that lights up the dim February landscape is a herald. We believe in it, and that is the principal thing.

A peasant stood in the roadway in front of the car, and the Colonel had to pull up.

Long life to yer honour, cried the old man, and in his eyes I read the reverence of yore. He was a hairy and boisterous fellow, and we had to listen to his description of his house,

which he said was damp enough to give a wild-duck rheumatism. I promised to help him, and we bade him godspeed. A godspeed, I said, which is probably for eternity.

We are very late, the Colonel muttered. It was unlucky meeting him.

Don't say that. It is pleasant to meet literature on the road from Ballyglass to Ballinafad.

The road looped round the shoulder of a hill, and beyond a long straight bridge or viaduct we spied the gate of Ballinafad.

But, said the Colonel, I am afraid that this gate is always kept locked. You'll miss your train.

If I were to miss a thousand trains, I will see Llewellyn's monastery.

You'll certainly miss your train. It is two miles round—two Irish miles.

He pulled up before a rusty gate, and bounding out of the trap, I shook it. It was locked, but there was a stile beside it.

We can send the trap round to the other gate, which is nearer by two miles to the station, and walk up to the house.

Yes, we can do that, he said.

Then let us do it, for I must see Llewellyn's mission house or monastery.

Before Moore Hall, Ballinafad was, the Colonel answered, and he told me how the Blakes had kept their property through the Penal Laws by a special charter granted to them by Charles II. The charter he assured me was still preserved, and I asked if all this comely woodland were going to be given over to the monks. Groves in which, I said, it would be easy to imagine a rout of nymphs and satyrs. Or Thyrsis praying the goat-herd to seat himself in the shelter of that great oak, and pipe to him. Delightful woods. And whilst talking of Amaryllis, Silenus and the Zephyrs, some twenty or thirty youths passed across the glade, and having need to overtake them for inquiry we called to their shepherd, who stopped his flock. He told us that we should find Father—— 'within,' and on the house coming into

view I said: I always hated that strange porch, so out of keeping is it with the landscape.

The Colonel answered that the house was built by our grandfather, Maurice Blake, a soldier who had served in the Peninsula, and that the porch was probably an imperfect memory of one he had seen in Italy on his way home. No attempt, I said, has been yet made to give the house an ecclesiastical air.

The ecclesiastical changes will come later on, the Colonel replied, and he expounded once more the complex question of Llewellyn's rights under his father's will, and he continued to expound it whilst I looked round the drawing-room in which my mother and her sisters had certainly played a selection from *Norma*, and in which Joe had strummed his memories of *Traviata* and *Il Trovatore* for Biddy's and for his own amusement. The remembered pictures were still on the walls—setters creeping up to birds, probably grouse; and I began to peer into the painting like a Bond Street dealer, for the approach of a priest always sets me mumming. The door opened, and a young man of sleek speech and calves begged us to be seated; and choosing the most comfortable chair for himself, and tossing himself till he discovered its easiest corner, he told us that a large number of the last batch of missionaries sent out to West Africa had died, the climate being unhealthy, but another batch was going out shortly, and he hoped not to lose so many.

And did those that died pray for the soul of Count Llewellyn Blake?

He hoped that they had done so, for Count Llewellyn Blake had done a great deal for them, and I put it to him that Llewellyn's soul was a heavy tax upon the population of Mayo, something like seventeen out of thirty-six having died. We asked him some questions regarding the possibility of converting the savages to a more rational spirituality than that which they practised in the forest.

We meet with a great many difficulties; first and foremost

the unwillingness of the men to relinquish their wives.

I asked if any provision was being made for the abandoned wives?

The young man admitted that they had not thought out that side of the question.

The children, I answered, offer you a fairer field.

Yes, we try to get hold of the children, he answered; and after some conversation with me about the climate of Africa being answerable for much of the faith of the savages in their superstitions, the young priest turned to the Colonel, and ventured to express a hope that he would come over again from Moore Hall to see them, bringing his two little boys with him. Father Zimmermann, who is at present in Switzerland, he said, will be back in Ballinafad at the end of the month.

The whole scheme is intimately associated with Father Zimmermann, the Colonel said on our way to the stables. A very different man from the one we have seen.

But how can he be different and continue the traffic he is engaged in? I cannot disassociate a man from his work as you do. A man is his work.

In the stables we were met by some of Joe Blake's hirelings, stablemen of old time who had seen the cracks go up to the Curragh, and they lamented the change, a foreign priest, they said, come to take Irishmen away to Africa, one whom Count Llewellyn had met at Ballinafad some two or three years ago, and when he ordered Jimmy Glynn to ready the dining-room for Mass, they began to have a notion of what was going to happen. The tenants, too, had got wind of the change, and were waiting at the hall door, asking how much of the land the Count was going to make over to the Swiss boyo, who was up to the height of his ankles in carpets before he took up with religion. Literature again, I whispered, and listened with glee to the tale of how the Swiss boyo and the Count had escaped through the garden, but were caught up at Lakemount, brought to bay, and how getting round them the

peasants had sworn that every one of them would turn Protestant if any bloody monks were put into Ballinafad. The rain that came towards us aslant over the bog was in our faces, and with large drops running down my nose I continued: The monks and Llewellyn's anxiety about his soul may well bring about a revival of Christianity. You heard them say they would turn Protestant.

I think the word Protestant was a sop for you, the Colonel answered.

The rain splashed in our faces, making conversation difficult, and when it ceased I heard the Colonel's voice saying from under his mackintosh: I should like to outwit Llewellyn.

It is very difficult for me to understand you, for you are not moved by any mean sense of future pecuniary loss to yourself; your fingers do not itch to clutch. Family feeling is strong in you, stronger than in me. No one could be more shocked than you when I told you that I had heard the ecclesiastics had gotten Howth Castle, and the disappearance of Ballinafad affects you in the same way. Yet you contrive to reconcile admiration of the cause with detestation of the result. For, of course, as long as priests can persuade people that Masses for the dead will get their souls out of Purgatory they will continue to despoil their relations.

The rain is coming on again, the Colonel interjected, and if the train isn't late we shall miss it. At every hill I asked how far we were from the station. The train was late, and walking up the platform I grew so bitter about Catholicism that he at last said: A religion, at all events, that has made more converts than any other.

The witless and hysterical—ladies who have been through the Divorce Courts and young men with filthy careers behind them.

The train steamed in, and the porter cried, First class behind! Would you like to have your hat-box in the carriage with you? Yes, I answered mechanically, and jumped into the train, glad to escape from a wrangle that had become

unendurable. The Colonel had said the night before last that we had better not see each other, and though the words seemed hard I could not resist their truth, for it was indeed a relief to get away from him. Catholics and Protestants don't mix; we are never comfortable in the society of Catholics. The guard blew his whistle, the train moved up the platform, the Colonel passed out of sight, and I said: So this is the end. He thinks that I have changed. We have both changed, and the fault is neither with him nor with me. He was born a Papist, and this is the end; unendurable words if we have given all our love. And thinking how much I had lost, I sat looking out on the wet fields of Mayo. So this is the end! I cried, scaring a fellow-passenger, who looked at me askance over his newspaper. He returned to his paper, I to my thoughts, which were no longer with the Colonel but with myself. In which direction does my life lie? I asked. My mission in Ireland is over, and there is little casual visiting in Paris. I shall write less and read more, and the large book containing the thirty-six plays will never be out of my hand.

At the prospect of becoming another Sir Sidney Lee, Paris began to recede, and I remembered that Steer and Tonks and Sickert lived in London. But even if I live in London I shall have to spend my evenings alone, unless I join a club. Bayreuth falls only every second year, and the concerts at the Queen's Hall are often common enough. Saint-Saëns and Dvorak are often played, and a private orchestra is beyond my means. But with a piano. . . . A piano demands a wife, and with one who could play Schumann, Schubert, Wagner, Chopin, and Liszt, the evenings would go by happily, an excellent cigar in my mouth, my stern in a comfortable armchair. Had I married Doris I should have an hour and a half of music every evening, and if the rule were maintained for several years, we should get through the vast pile of chamber-music. I have a taste for Scarlatti; and if this admirable woman who can play all Bach were to bear me a

child, he would inherit his mother's musical ear, and it is not likely that my son would lack inventive faculty and sense of composition. And while watching the musical instinct developing in him, my heart will be filling with joy, and I shall look forward to hearing all the ridiculous and uncouth strains that have tempted and deceived me reduced to shape, but not in symphonies—my son will write operas, the words as well as the music, for I should like him to inherit as much of my literary gifts as will enable him to construct the poem on which to weave the woof, but not more.

My thoughts were away in a jiffy in France, for the German musical idiom is worn to rags; but there is a musical atmosphere in France, and I remembered a great stone bridge with fishermen sitting on the quays, their legs hanging over the side. I had watched their floats being carried down by the current last year, had seen them lift their floats out of the current and drop them in again, and had waited, pretending to myself that I would like to see a fish rise, but really interested in the adventure that I knew to be at my heels. An empty fly came by, and the driver asked if he might take me to Chinon. It seemed as if I heard the name, and feeling Chinon to be my adventure, I jumped into the carriage, and was driven along a road of which I remember nothing except a steep hill and at the top of it a feudal castle in ruins. Our poor little horse could hardly drag us up the hill, and the coachman turned in his seat and began to relate some history; but at that moment my eyes were taken up by a poster representing a house, or castle—I was not sure which—an extravagant painting it was. *Post-Impressionism*, I said, at Chinon; and dismissing the driver, I applied to an old man sitting by the side of the gate, his shaggy dog beside him, for information.

C'est le portrait de la maison.

Laquelle? Pardon, monsieur, mais je ne vois pas une maison ici qui ait pu vous servir de modèle.

La maison n'est pas encore construite. Je l'ai seulement dessinée

pour inspirer l'acheteur de la propriété que voici. Le clos St. Georges.

Une vraie petite aventure, I said to myself, and followed the old man round the enclosure, amused by the pomp with which he vaunted the excellence of his grapes and the courtesy with which he invited my admiration of the pears and peaches ripening on the southern wall. I had seen fine peaches and pears at home, but never flowers like silk gathered into a rosette. And seeing that I was genuinely ignorant, he told me the tree in question was a *grenadier,* and trying to remember what a *grenadier* was in English, I stood admiring the roofs of Chinon under the hill.

C'est là où naquit notre grand Rabelais.

Finir mes jours en face de la ville de Rabelais ; quelle joie pour un Irlandais !

Mais, monsieur, vous êtes encore jeune ; cinquante et quelques années ; and he looked at me interrogatively and regretfully, for the old man was seventy *et quelques années.*

Ici, je voudrais vivre et mourir, I answered mechanically.

Rien ne vous empêche, monsieur, d'acheter ma vigne . . . et pas cher. Voyez-vous il y a des avantages ; and he led me down into a pit which he had digged in the centre of the enclosure, and pointed out to me a great many stones and broken arches.

Il y a de quoi bâtir une jolie maison ; and I learnt from him that these stones had once formed part of the castle, that it was here that Henry of Anjou (Henry II. of England) had died on the altar steps, and that the house I had in mind, with the old carvings he had stacked by the hut in which he and his dog lived let into the walls, would not cost me more than a thousand pounds to build. He asked me if I would like to see his pictures, for when he was not spraying his vines he was painting scenes from the life of Joan of Arc in distemper, and spraying vines had become hard work ; he was seventy-five, and wished to finish his paintings before he died.

Achetez donc ma vigne, monsieur ; finissez vos jours en face de la

ville où naquit notre grand Rabelais.

Why not?

And now with the advent of my new idea—that a musician was the legitimate end of my life—the Clos St. Georges began to acquire a new and potent significance. She and the boy and the vineyard will be the pear and the peach, the apricot, the nectarine, the bottle of wine from my own vineyard. My life will have to end somewhere. Why not in the Clos St. Georges? Because *Hail and Farewell* must be written, a voice answered from within. Before the vineyard could be purchased and the house built *Hail and Farewell* must be finished. *Ave* was in the publisher's hands; a good deal of *Salve* was written; there was a sketch, chapter for chapter, down to the very end. And between Mullingar and Dublin I realised, more acutely than I had ever done before, that *Hail and Farewell* could not be abandoned for a vineyard. I have been led to write it, by whom I know not, but I have been led by the hand like a little child. And it was borne in upon me at the same time that a sacrifice was demanded of me, by whom I knew not, nor for what purpose, but I felt I must leave my native land and my friends for the sake of the book; a work of liberation I divined it to be—liberation from ritual and priests, a book of precept and example, a turning-point in Ireland's destiny, and yet I prayed that I might be spared the pain of the writing it and permitted instead to acquire the Clos St. Georges, a wife, and a son. But no man escapes his fate. Something was propelling me out of Ireland, whither I was not yet sure. I must yield to instinct, I said to Æ. He was deeply moved.

You are going away from us to spend your evenings with Steer and Tonks, but where shall I spend mine?

It may grieve you to lose me, dear Æ, and it grieves me to lose you. . . . I shall never find anybody like you again. *Æ is only found once in a lifetime.*

You'll not forget me? he said, grasping my hand.

The next night we met at Bailey's, the Land Commissioner, who lives in Earlsfort Terrace. I had gained his friendship in the last year of my sojourn in Ireland, and found his alert and witty mind so pleasant that I had begun to think it a pity I had let him go by unknown for so many years. Bailey knows a good picture and buys one occasionally, he reads books and has practised literature, and will probably practise it again; some day he will write his memoirs. And, better still, he practises life, going away every year for long travel, to return to Ireland, his mind enriched. He has not influenced me in my life as Æ, or John Eglinton, or Yeats, and to speak of him here is a little outside of my subject, but if I closed this book without mention of him it would seem that I had forgotten the many hours we passed together. Besides, his dinner-party is fixed in my mind. He assembled all my friends: Æ, Ernest Longworth, Philip Hanson, John Healy, John Eglinton, the graceful and witty Dena Tyrrell, and Susan Mitchell, who sang songs about the friends I was leaving behind me.

On a grey windless morning in February the train took me to Kingstown, and I had always looked forward to leaving Ireland in May, seeking the words of a last farewell or murmuring the words of Catullus when he journeyed over land and sea to burn the body of his brother, fitting them to my circumstance by the change of a single word:

ATQUE IN PERPETUUM, MATER, AVE ATQUE VALE,

but our dreams and our circumstances are often in conflict, and never were they in greater opposition than the day the train took me from Westland Row past a long, barren tract of sand: a grey sky hanging low over the sea far away in the offing without a ripple upon it. If the evening had been a golden evening my heart might have overflowed with fine sentiments; for it is on golden evenings that fine sentiments overflow the heart! the heart is then like crystal

that the least touch will break; but on a cold, bleak, February morning the prophet is as uninspired as his humblest fellow, and a very humble fellow, forgetful of Ireland, forgetful of Catholicism, forgetful of literature, went below to think of the friends he had left behind him—Æ and the rest.

THE END